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# THE UNIVERSAL ASPECTS OF FASCISM

BY  
JAMES STRACHEY BARNES, F.R.G.S.

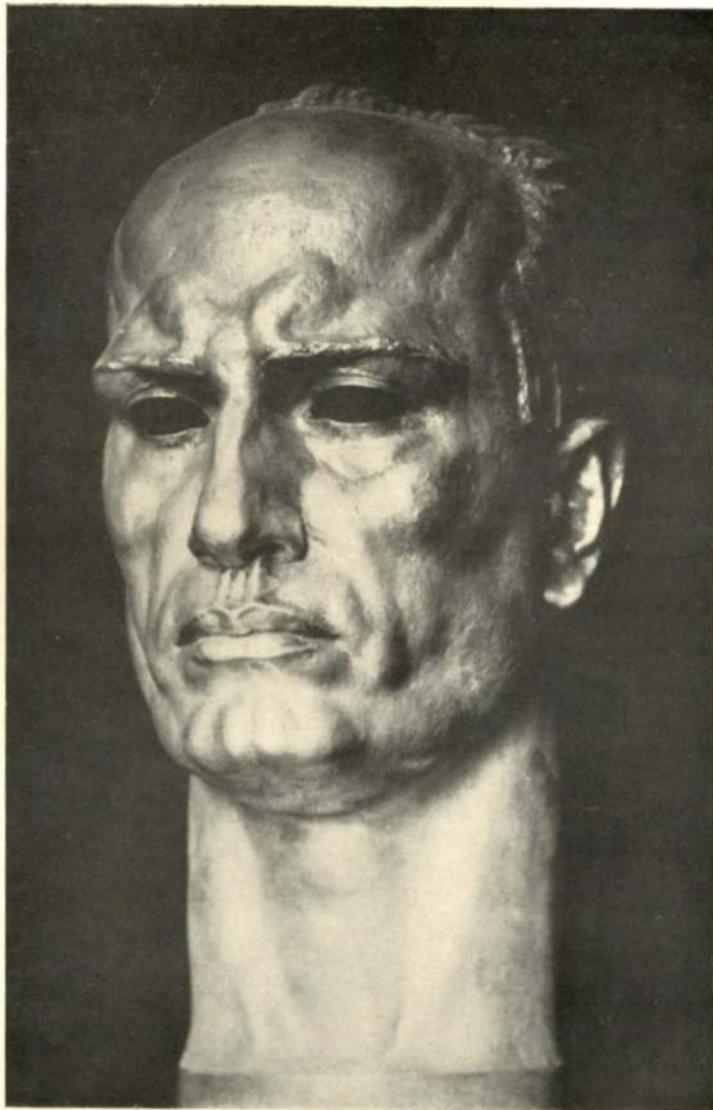
Member of the Royal Institute of International Affairs

With a specially written Preface

BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY  
SIGNOR BENITO MUSSOLINI

AN authoritative work on the political doctrines of Fascism. The book is by one who knows Italy intimately, who has studied Fascism ever since its rise as a political movement, and who is a profound student of political science. It is written with the utmost clarity such as should appeal to the general reader as well as to experts; and the doctrines laid down are unreservedly endorsed by the Italian Prime Minister. It is in no sense a work of Italian propaganda, but one of universal appeal, being the exposition of a doctrine of the State which claims to be the only practical alternative doctrine to Socialism as a solution to our present discontents.

ILLUSTRATED



BENITO MUSSOLINI,  
*From a bust by Attilio Selva.*

# THE UNIVERSAL ASPECTS OF FASCISM

BY

JAMES STRACHEY BARNES, F.R.G.S.

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL  
AFFAIRS

LONDON

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*Absolute Liberalism contradicts our common  
humanity,  
Absolute Democracy our obvious inequality—  
(RAMIRO DE MAEZTU.)*

To

MY GRANDFATHER,  
SIR JOHN STRACHEY, G.C.S.I., C.I.E., D.C.L.

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

FIRST and foremost I have to thank His Excellency, Signor Benito Mussolini, for honouring my book with a Preface. I am particularly grateful to him for this honour because I am anxious that my book shall indeed represent for English readers an authentic account of Fascism, as the authors of the movement and those who gave it its name understand it. So this book goes out with the Duce's *imprimatur*; and thereby I hope to repay him in some small measure for his kindness, in that my readers and critics will now know that what I have to say is not merely the expression of my own personal standpoint towards politics for which I have appropriated the name "Fascism," but also that of the man who holds the moral copyright, so to speak, for the term, who has moulded the movement as it has become. Hence, whatever people may think of the principles of Fascism, they will be bound to take them into consideration as they really are acknowledged in Italy and not as they would fancy them to be, with the result that a great deal of hostile criticism beside the point should henceforth be eliminated once and for all.

I wish also to tender my thanks very particularly to the Rev. A. Vermeersch, Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Gregorian University in Rome, for his kindness in reading through my first draft and for the many suggestions he has contributed to make the text more philosophically accurate. I am, moreover, very much indebted to my friend, His Excellency, Signor Emilio Brodrero, Under Secretary of State for Public Instruction, who has helped me to elucidate a number of delicate points touching the exact interpretation of fascist doctrine ; and to my young friend, Mr. Henry John, for numerous useful suggestions and for having introduced me to the works of Jacques Maritain and Albert Valensin. These two writers base their thought on that of their master, St. Thomas Aquinas, and I have made conspicuous use of them ; for I have found no happier combination exists for producing a lucid exposition of difficult philosophical points than that which is the outcome of the acute French logic of these essentially modern Frenchmen, exquisitely neat French expression and the incomparable wisdom of the Angelic Doctor.

This itself is an additional reason why I have chosen the scholastic method by which to expound the political Philosophy underlying Fascism. It is the method of common sense, the method, in its elementary stages, most easily assimilated by the general reader. I

consider, too, that Neo-Scholasticism is, taken as a whole, the most vital school of Philosophy in Europe to-day, the one which, more than any other, is capable of assimilating what is of value in the other schools and so making for the greater philosophic progress.

In saying this, however, I do not wish to disparage other methods. There is no greater admirer than myself of the modern mathematical school, of which Mr. Whitehead is the most eminent exponent, and although, with respect to Idealism, I consider there is a fatal flaw in Hegelian logic, in which Idealism has become only too commonly identified ; although I consider the results of Hegelism to be on the whole, and in certain departments wholly, pernicious, I have the very greatest respect for Professor Gentile, who is generally classed as a Neo-Hegelian (though perhaps unduly, since he derives more from Vico than from Hegel), not only for his imperishable work as an historian and pedagogue, but as the philosopher, who, in the generations to come, is likely to be given a special niche of honour by those very schools that now oppose him, on account of his having paved the way for a genuine reconciliation between Idealism and Realism. I confess I find great difficulty myself in always following his thought, and when I do, I by no means always find myself in agreement with him. But I am quite certain that many of his Neo-Scholastic critics very

frequently misinterpret him ; and I have a shrewd intuition that the above judgment will prove, in the long run, to be the correct one.

For the rest, I have been careful to acknowledge in the text or in footnotes the sources of information on which I have drawn ; and at the end of the book I have appended an ample bibliography of the works I have consulted in the course of preparing the present work.

My own knowledge of Italy and of Italians dates from my earliest childhood. Practically the first ten years of my life were spent in Florence in the house of my grandfather, the late Sir John Strachey, to whom this work is dedicated, and with Italy I have never since lost touch. Apart from minor visits, I spent nine months in Italy in 1909, when I was nineteen years of age, ten months in 1911, seven months in 1914 and six months during the War as *liaison* officer between the British and Italian Air Forces. I was in Italy during the seizure of the factories by the workmen in 1920, and since 1923 I have been living continuously in Rome as my headquarters, and have had occasion, during these years, of visiting, without exception, every province of this fair land.

J.S.B.

Rome, September, 1927.

## PREFACE BY HIS EXCELLENCY BENITO MUSSOLINI

THE book which I have the pleasure of prefacing is from the pen of a clear-minded English thinker who knows Italy and the Italians perfectly, and not less perfectly Fascism. It is, therefore, a book destined to dissipate—among men of good faith—that halo of incomprehension which for so many years has surrounded Fascism in the world at large and is due to many causes, of which the principal are the following.

Before all things, a new movement that announces itself as the destroyer, not only in doctrine but also in practice, of principles universally considered and followed, is bound to arouse violent hostility. It is wholly in the logic of things that the international Socialist, Democratic, Liberal, Masonic and Bolshevik world should be furiously anti-Fascist. The extent of the fury is the measure of the upheaval of ideas brought about by the Fascist Revolution. It is also logical that the anti-Fascist forces throughout the world should seek to keep men's minds in ignorance of what Fascism really stands for both in respect of its

doctrine and its reality. This explains the crass stupidity which embellishes the articles and speeches of certain men who have the reputation of being eminent in their own countries.

The misunderstanding of Fascism is due, besides, to journalistic literature which has seized hold of the exterior, episodical, picturesque and interesting aspects of the Fascist Revolution, and has not paused to look deeply into the matter ; the consequence is that the public at large is left either in darkness or has obtained a notion of Fascism that is superficial.

Lastly, there is the semi-philosophical hostility of those who refuse to admit that Italy is capable of initiating—for the third time in her history—new forms of political civilisation. For these, history came irrevocably to an end in 1789.

These three causes—with the minor ones it is useless to concern ourselves—are sufficient to explain how it is that, after five years of Fascist rule, the world is still full of anti-Fascist prejudices.

Nevertheless, as bit by bit Fascist rule reveals its formidable will and capacity to *endure*, the speculations which people used to make about its *transitoriness*, are collapsing ; and the interest which thinking persons are beginning to take in it, becomes evident. Lately there appeared a book by a German professor, Gutkind, and now his book is followed by this

solid, interesting, exhaustive volume by Barnes, an Englishman.

Whoever reads it will convince himself that Barnes is well prepared for his task. His work is, in fact, the product of a direct knowledge of the question : Barnes knows Fascism both in its doctrinal elaboration and in its practical realisation. His book is not the result of a rapid tour or a brief sojourn in Italy, but is the witness of a man who, having lived long in Italy, and knowing the language and mind of Italians, is able to penetrate into the intimacy of things and see what a hurried and distracted traveller cannot see.

This valuable testimony of Barnes is expressed in the title which he has given his book. He has sought to make clear and to illustrate the universal aspects of Fascism ; and he has succeeded. These aspects exist. Fascism is a purely Italian phenomenon in its historical expression, but its doctrinal postulates have a universal character. Fascism sets and solves problems which are common to many peoples, and precisely to those peoples who have experienced and are tired of Demo-Liberal rule and of the conventional lies attached thereto. The fact that the application of Demo-Liberal principles (the individual outside and opposed to the State) has varied from nation to nation, in no wise destroys the character of universality which these principles have enjoyed from 1848 to 1914. In the

same way the fact that Fascism possesses a specific and original Italian stamp, does not prevent its principles having an application in other countries, in other forms, as indeed has already occurred. It is our proud prophecy that Fascism will come to fill the present century with itself even as Liberalism filled the nineteenth century. Through the experiment of two Revolutions, the modern world has sought to escape from Demo-Liberalism and the tragic contradictions of Marx—that is, the Russian and Italian Revolutions. On the first has already fallen the judgment of civilised peoples: the experiment has been shown to be more destructive than creative. For the second, ours, the Fascist or Roman one, the experiment has been running five years with eminently creative results: in the institutions, the laws, the works, the very psychology of a whole people. The Fascist experiment is so sure of itself that it has been able to set out its programme of political reform during the next few years. The Fascist experiment is marching on: from the Labour Charter to the new representation in the legislature. Russia, on the other hand, is going back: there the Revolution is undergoing a process of denying itself both economically and politically. The Communist system of economy has failed and the dream of a world Revolution has set. Bolshevism, after ten years, is standing hat in hand,

begging the western middle classes for experts and dollars.

I thank Barnes for his noble effort and wish his volume the very best success among the English public, for the sake also of the truly traditional friendship between Great Britain and Italy. It is necessary, among other things, for statesmen to convince themselves that it is impossible to have a foreign policy if they ignore Fascism, given that Fascism identifies itself and will identify itself for many tens of years with the whole Italian nation.

*Mussolini;*

## INTRODUCTION

### § I

Efforts have been made, more or less successfully, to create a Science of Politics—*Sociology*, as it has been aptly called—based solely on the facts of observation and, where possible, of experiment ; facts duly classified and analysed, from which emerge certain natural laws governing the life of human society. By natural laws are meant uniformities in the ordinary scientific sense, that is, generalities having the character of successive approximations to the truth.\*

A Science of this kind is essentially amoral. It follows a method wholly inductive and empirical, asking of history and of observation answers to such questions as the following : Are there any general and constant conditions, and, if so, what are they, that

\* It was Herbert Spencer, I believe, who first popularised the term "Sociology" ; but in his ambitious *Principles of Sociology* he failed, perhaps willy-nilly, to keep the Science within the narrow meaning here defined, although there are many indications that lead one to suppose that he had an intuition of this being both possible and desirable. The same may be said of Comte with respect to his *Positivist Philosophy*.

entail the decadence or corruption of the body politic? Are there other conditions, and, if so, what, that are invariably associated with the health and prosperity of human societies?\*

Such a Science may be calculated, also, to throw light, if only indirectly, on a number of practical questions. For example: Given an end proposed by a given Government in given conditions, what choice of means are there by which that end may be furthered? And again: Given certain pathological conditions affecting a particular community, what remedies are available, if any, to restore to that community its health?

Macchiavelli may, with justice, be regarded as the founder of Sociology. It is true that he was more of a physician prescribing remedies for the ills from which his country was suffering at the time than a man of Science concerned mainly with the discovery of general laws. But his nostrums were the fruit of the then newly-stirring scientific spirit, fertilised by a passionate desire to free Italy from foreign dominion,—that is, they were the result of inductive and empirical reasoning upon a number of carefully classified and analysed facts bearing upon collective human nature and applied to the end he had in view—facts, moreover, culled from

\* Cf. Jacques Maritain, *Une Opinion sur Charles Maurras et le Devoir des Catholiques*, p. 22, (Librairie Plon, Paris, 1926).

a direct and acute observation of the society of his day and from history. He was the first eminent writer on politics who adopted the modern scientific method, and, though many of the means he recommended can only be described as infamous, his various treatises remain a storehouse of worldly wisdom, which, even now, no reflective and practical statesman can afford altogether to neglect.

In modern times, another Italian, Vilfredo Pareto, gifted with something of Macchiavelli's wit and economy of style, but possessed of the fully developed scientific spirit of the present generation, has, with very considerable success, endeavoured to lay a secure foundation for this Science.\* And there are others, only less distinguished, who have essayed the same task, notably Durkheim, Le Play and Maurras, to mention three names with whose works I am personally acquainted. Students, too, of mob-psychology, like Gustave Le Bon and Graham Wallas, may be considered a branch of the same root.

This "Sociology" may be described, indeed, as the Physiology of society; and, as the handmaiden of Physiology is the practising physician, so the handmaiden of Sociology is the practical statesman.

No one will deny that a Science of this kind (assuming, as I think we have the right to assume, that it has

\* Vilfredo Pareto, *Trattato di Sociologia*.

already shown itself capable of elucidating a number of important laws and promises to achieve a considerable development) deserves to be encouraged as an extremely useful branch of study, being the synthesis, as Pareto defines it (while admitting the definition to be imperfect) of the special social Sciences of History, Jurisprudence, Economics, etc.\* To be versed in it should sharpen the intuition and widen the experience of a statesman and provide him with landmarks to guide him in the piloting of the Ship of State, tempering his idealism with the stern facts of reality.

Sociology, however, is itself only a branch of Political Science in the wide sense of the term. It is of importance to make this distinction, whether or not we regard Political Science as an autonomous Science or as the general term applicable to the whole group of Sciences that bear directly upon politics. However this may be, I insist that there can be no real Political

\* It is generally considered that the father of modern Economics is the Englishman, Adam Smith. It was the Romans, on the other hand, who laid the foundations of modern Jurisprudence; while the pioneer of the Science or "Philosophy" of History, was the Italian Gian. Battista Vico (1688-1744), whose most prominent modern representatives are two of his own countrymen, Benedetto Croce and Giovanni Gentile. Later on I shall have occasion to discuss certain aspects of these three special social sciences; for Fascism stands for a repudiation of certain doctrines developed in the course of the nineteenth century in a direction at variance with the classical principles informing these sciences, developments associated with Philosophical Idealism, the positive theory of Rights and the Manchester School of Economics.

Science without at least a working theory of the true ends of human existence, whereby a Moral Philosophy is implied, ends which Sociology, properly speaking, wholly ignores. Rational progress is only possible when it is known to what end it is desired to progress. So that Political Science, as I take it, may be said, on the one hand, to comprise Sociology, and, on the other, to be comprised by Philosophy, that is, by an Ethic, if not by a Metaphysic also. If I were to attempt a definition, I would put it thus: Political Science has as its object, on the one hand, the investigation of the essential characteristics of human society, regarded as a natural phenomenon, together with the demonstration of such uniformities as emerge from the study of human society under various conditions and phases of development (Sociology); and, on the other hand, the ascertaining of the ends that society fulfils, is capable of fulfilling or ought to fulfil, together with the principles governing right conduct with respect to the actions of public authorities (Philosophy).

Let me illustrate this distinction, in the first place, by an analogy. Physiology tells us of the construction and functioning of the human body, from which we may deduce certain rules of physical health, granted that we set ourselves the practical question, in the light of the facts elucidated by Physiology, how to maintain ourselves in physical health. If we include within this

Science an examination of the effects of moral states of mind on physical health, pathology and so forth, our rules of health should be fairly comprehensive. Similarly, rules of health and rules of material prosperity may be deduced from Sociology for the body politic. Did we assume, however, that physical health were the sole end of human existence and, conversely, that material prosperity were the sole end of human society, we should already be stepping outside the respective domains of Physiology and Sociology. We should be subscribing to a materialistic Philosophy. It follows, therefore, that Sociology, as defined, cannot really stand by itself as the Science of Politics.

The truth is that Sociology, like every other empirical science, is incapable itself of leading us anywhere in the practical affairs of life. These Sciences merely increase our hold over nature and so enable us to do more easily and with less risk of failure what we *choose*. They do not choose for us. They contain no categorical imperative. They merely say, "If you do this or that, such and such a consequence or consequences may be regarded as more or less certain to ensue."\*

Sociology, for example, may affirm in a particular

\* G. K. Chesterton has put this point somewhere, very neatly, to the effect that a law of nature can be recognised as much by resisting it as by submitting to it, by out-maneuvring it or even using it against itself, as in the case of the arch.

case—to give now an example illustrative of this important distinction—that if a given Nation's population continues to increase in conditions which preclude adequate facilities for emigration or absorption through a parallel increase in industrial development, either a war or a plague or a famine or a general lowering of the standard of life must, other things being equal, result. Itself does not, cannot prescribe the precise remedy. As we have seen, however, I do not deny that Sociology may open our eyes to the means by which a given end may be effected ; but almost invariably it points to a wide choice of means, and, if we subscribe to a Moral Philosophy, not all these means may be legitimate. Thus, in the example just given, it might be supposed by some that the solution pointed to was the artificial restriction of births, the end in view being the avoidance of the evils enumerated. But is this means legitimate ? Whether we answer "yes" or "no," we imply some Moral Philosophy. And, again, is it the only remedy available ? Not at all, it seems. For Sociology has a good deal more to say on the subject. It may lay down, in the first place, with equal truth, that if the artificial restriction of births be resorted to, certain other consequences are likely to follow, such as the encouragement of vice and of selfishness, the decline of population beyond the limits of prudence, the rapid depopulation of the country-side (for a well-populated country-side

depends on a system of peasant proprietorship or of yeoman farmers, who are only capable of maintaining themselves by means of large families), a disproportionate increase of wage-earners at the expense of that section of the population which controls its own means of livelihood, the concentration of the population in cities with the attendant evil results of lowered vitality, the influx of foreign elements on a scale calculated to injure the ethnical homogeneity of the race, the weakening of the military strength of the nation *vis-à-vis* rival powers, etc., all of which consequences, for instance, France, where the artificial restriction of births is widely practised, is in process of undergoing. In the second place it points to other remedies, on all of which it can offer some instruction, as, for instance, the raising by other processes of the general standard of living, coupled with an increase of opportunity for economic advancement, resulting in later marriages and therefore smaller average families and in greater opportunities to sublimate the sexual passions, which constitute the predominant vent for psychic energy only where the standard of life is low, that is, with regard not only to material conditions but in the absence of opportunities for pursuing intellectual pursuits and healthy physical recreation. There is also the remedy of education in the highest sense of the word, the inculcation of habits of self-control, of a frugal life, of respect for one's

women-kind, etc., to which end there is no influence more powerful than that of Religion.

I do not intend, however, to follow this point into greater detail. I afford it as an illustration of the limits to the teachings of Sociology and in order to emphasise the fact that we must indeed know the ends for which society is instituted, and subscribe to some kind of Moral Philosophy before Sociology can be of the least use to us.

“Naturalism” is the term used to denote that school of sociologists who fall into the error of supposing that Sociology is the master-key of Political Science. Students should be well warned of this danger. Sociologists like Durkheim, Maurras and others, have too often thus confused the issue. Why is it that Macchiavelli has earned for himself so evil a name? Because, although he had clear and, taken by themselves, admirable aims in view, he had no true Philosophy nor Religion, by which he could synthesise his aims and estimate the true value of the means which he recommended. *Au point de vue de la Science Politique, il y a ainsi danger de s'enclore dans l'empirisme comme dans une doctrine suffisante, et de refuser les synthèses plus hautes qui seules peuvent conduire à la science proprement dite. L'erreur où l'on risque alors de tomber est celle du “naturalisme” politique.*\* Sociology, in fine, “n'est

\* Jacques Maritain, *Une Opinion sur Charles Maurras et le Devoir des Catholiques*, p. 47, (Librairie Plon, Paris, 1926).

*que la préparation, la phase de déblaiement expérimental qui précède la science.*\*\* It may be, like Machiavelli's *Principe*, a treasure-house of worldly wisdom ; or it may reveal to us, in masterly fashion, as in Pareto's *Trattato di Sociologia*, the effects on the general health and prosperity of the body politic of different institutions, constitutions, laws, customs, religions, philosophies, habits of thought and emotion, systems of economy, climate, topography, etc., etc., in varying or analogous conditions. It may be deemed, indeed, the *vade-mecum* of the practical statesman. But unless the statesman possess also a Religion or a Philosophy, even if it be only a practical philosophy or one intuitioned as through a glass darkly, or, to say the least, a definite *Weltanschauung*, Sociology can be of no practical use to him whatever.

## § II

It follows, therefore, that every political school or movement must have an underlying, if not altogether *The Universal Aspects of Fascism.* a conscious, political Philosophy ; and if a political movement is to have any permanent or universal worth, it is of the utmost importance that the political Philosophy underlying it should be true.

The purpose of this book, as the title denotes, is to

\* *Ibid.*, p. 24. Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, I, 980, b. 26.

expound the universal aspects of Fascism. Now, the only absolutely universal aspects of Fascism are the Philosophy underlying the movement, and its *Weltanschauung*. In a sense it is stretching it a little far to call either of these things Fascism, particularly the first ; for the Philosophy underlying Fascism existed before Fascism ;\* and its *Weltanschauung* is only an emphasis on certain qualities of the human spirit, the value of which, taken by themselves, has never been called in question.

Nevertheless, I have decided to call these things Fascism, if only because they are, indeed, the stuff of which Fascism is made and the rock upon which Fascism is building a new political order and a new type of State. Moreover, it is this movement, called Fascism, which is bringing once more into honour, in men's minds, the truths enshrined in the old Philosophy.

Then there is another quasi-universal aspect of Fascism. This is the new political order, the new type of State—in other words, the new institutions, which the movement is bringing into existence—an aspect which is not absolutely universal, because what suits one Nation will not necessarily suit another, living in different conditions, at different times, with different characteristics and different needs. But all the greater

\* Its existence before Fascism does not imply that, in the meantime, it has not developed, nor that Fascism itself may not have given a special impetus to its development. Truth is a vital principle. If it is not lost it grows, it develops ; but it grows consistently. Within the acorn is the image of the oak.

civilised States of the present day have much in common, perhaps more in common than is usually supposed. The industrialisation of production, distribution and exchange, and the rapid means of transport and communication, have levelled the world up and down. We are all ill with much the same kind of maladies, less virulent here than there, but most of them prevalent everywhere. Most of the great Powers have the same order of problems requiring solution, the problems of Capital and Labour, of the glaring inequalities in the distribution of property, of the greater or lesser inefficiency of the parliamentary system, of the instability of Governments, of general discontent and restlessness, etc., etc., etc. Most people are perplexed and know not where to turn for a solution. State Socialism, which is the *reductio ad absurdum* of Capitalism\* in that it would level everybody down to a salaried, propertyless, proletarian class, is more and more coming to be recognised as a bankrupt policy, Red Syndicalism

\* I use the term "Capitalism" here in its restricted sense, as contrasted with "Distributism," e.g., as that economic system which tends to concentrate the means of production into the hands of the few and to reduce the vast majority of people to the status of wage-earners, with little opportunity for saving—each according to his class—beyond what is barely necessary to keep body and soul together when old age, sickness or temporary unemployment becomes their lot. There are of course other characteristics of "Capitalism" (against which Fascism sets its face), as for instance: the habit of mind of regarding production in terms of profits only, of regarding labour solely as a commodity and prices as being properly determinable by the interplay of supply and demand rather than with reference to the cost of production.

and Bolshevism as spelling red ruin. Liberalism is everywhere an anaemic plant, and most of the so-called Conservative Parties all the world over differ little in principle from the Liberal, except as being less inclined to flirt with Socialism. Fascism, on the other hand, claims to be an alternative remedy for the present discontents to that offered by the extremists of the Left, and it is the only important alternative remedy in the field, if we discount the false optimism of "wait and see." For it may well be possible that the institutions which Fascism is cautiously bringing into existence in Italy and slowly perfecting, may prove to be adaptable elsewhere. In so far as they are, Fascism has here too a kind of universal message. Part of the present work will accordingly deal with the Fascist programme and its concrete achievements; but the core of the book will deal with the Philosophy underlying the movement, the truth of which, I hope, if not altogether to prove—space alone excludes such a task—at least to illustrate in a convincing manner.

### § III

What I shall refrain from discussing outside this introduction are the vicissitudes of the fascist Revolution; the ephemeral episodes of its development; the pros and cons. of the transitory measures adopted to secure its triumph;

*The  
Fascist  
Revolution.*

its various excesses ; its picturesque aspects, and so forth. Something, on the other hand, will be said here of the personality of Mussolini ; while a chapter will be dedicated to the history of the movement, more, however, with the object of demonstrating its traditional character than to set out a chronicle of events.

Fascism has come as a Revolution. Italy is still in a state of Revolution. We have here, in fact, a Revolution in many ways as fundamental as the French or Russian Revolutions. We have a Revolution, not because there has been brought into power a new economic class of people (though, indeed, an altogether different type of people has been brought into power) ; not because the philosophical order of ideas underlying Fascism, nor yet its *Weltanschauung*, possess any startling novelty ; but because Fascism represents a complete reversal of the fundamental principles governing the theory of politics that have increasingly held sway in most civilised countries during the past few generations, and because it is bringing into being a new kind of political organisation, utterly different from the prevailing order and copied in no sense (in spite of certain resemblances) from anything that has been attempted hitherto. Lastly, we have here a Revolution because changes are being effected more or less abruptly and extra-constitutionally (however well it may be camouflaged), and this through the action of

a minority, possessed of a creed and the zeal of missionaries, who seized power in the first instance by violence, albeit with the passive consent of the vast majority of Italian citizens, sick to death of the old order. Since it is the fashion among certain sections of the Opposition in Italy to deny that any Revolution has taken place, in order to allow no excuses for certain fascist excesses, I can only ask, having stated the case with exactness, what then, indeed, constitutes a Revolution ?\*

Unfortunately excesses are the inevitable accompaniments of every great Revolution. Excesses—by which I mean acts of violence or persecution committed by private persons or groups of persons, with or without the tolerance of an extra-legal revolutionary authority—are never morally justifiable. But every fair-minded man, with a knowledge of human nature as it is, will, in the circumstances of a Revolution, make allowances for them.

A Revolution lets loose human passions. Fundamental principles are at stake, which both sides regard as vitally affecting the well-being of society, of all that they hold in reverence. Every Revolution presents opportunities to unscrupulous and undesirable persons for attempting to exploit the situation to their personal advantage and for indulging in crime. Numbers of

\* As Georges Sorel amply shows in his *La Révolution Dreyfusienne*, the essence of a Revolution is a change of ideas.

*agents provocateurs* insinuate themselves into the ranks of the revolutionary Party and attempt to discredit the movement from within by one disreputable means or another. New men, adventurous spirits, who, at the time of insurrection, gained distinction by qualities of leadership in the field, come to occupy positions of authority in Government, for which they are morally or temperamentally unfitted. Abuses of power consequently result ; and only gradually is it possible for the higher authority, however well-intentioned and however strong, to eliminate them, except at the risk of jeopardising the whole movement—for each of these revolutionary chiefs, by the very fact of their gift for leadership (not commensurate, however, with their sense of discipline or responsibility) will have a considerable local personal following, which it might be fatal to alienate.

To be fair, the excesses of a Revolution must be judged in comparison with the excesses of other equally important Revolutions, by the progressive diminution of the excesses as the Revolution runs its course, and by the efforts made by the Government to put a stop to them. The following paragraphs will deal with these points.

There are many persons, opposed to Fascism, who consider the French Revolution as a great emancipating movement which has conveyed immense benefits on

mankind. Yet consider the awful horrors that occurred when the principles of that Revolution were at stake ! Would these persons wish them away if, by so doing, they simultaneously wished away what they consider the beneficial results ? And what of the horrors of the recent Irish Rebellion ? The atrocities committed by Fascists are mild in comparison with those committed by the Irish ; and if the latter may be comparable to those committed in Italy by the Communists,\* the reprisals sanctioned by the British Government and committed by a specially recruited force of *bravoës*, when other more regular, though possibly more costly, means might have been employed to deal with the situation, are far more reprehensible than those ordered by the Fascists, who, before becoming themselves the Government, and in the face of an impotent Liberal Ministry, had no other alternative means at their disposal, if Italy were to be saved from economic ruin. Thirdly, what of the unparalleled horrors of the Russian Revolution ?

The truth is there is hardly an example in history of a Revolution so little abounding in excesses as the fascist Revolution. Moreover, the worst excesses have been committed by the other side. Again, the

\* Cf. Luigi Villari, *The Awakening of Italy*, (Methuen, London, 1924), in which an accurate and documented account is included of the Communist outrages committed in Italy before the Fascist march on Rome.

fascist excesses have been sporadic. They have never been part of the fascist programme except at the time when the Fascists were breaking the power of the Communists by reprisal, before the reins of Government fell into their hands. Since then every effort has been made by the Government to put them down (including every kind of reprisal committed by local fascist organisations). It was not easy at first to wean certain elements from the mentality engendered during the period preceding the march on Rome ; and for reasons stated above, it was not always possible to impose discipline. But the fact remains that each year, since the advent of Fascism to power, the excesses have diminished. This fact is incontestable. Gradually the irresponsible and undisciplined elements have been and are still being eliminated. Between the years 1923-1927, literally thousands of Fascists have been imprisoned for committing excesses ; thousands, for no other reason, have been expelled from the ranks of the Party. Literally scores of Prefects have been retired for failing to maintain order when Fascist bands, acting, albeit, under gross provocation, vented their wrath from time to time on members and organisations of the Opposition.

The last excesses committed of any considerable gravity are already, at the time of going to print, nearly one year old, namely, those following the two consecu-

tive attempts on Mussolini's life in the autumn of 1926. What was the answer of the Fascist Government ? The prosecution and imprisonment of hundreds of Fascists, the expulsion from the ranks of the Party of hundreds more, the dismissal of a large number of Prefects, the strengthening of the numbers and authority of the regular police, and the assumption of the Ministry of the Interior by Mussolini himself, in order that his great prestige and authority might be exercised directly on the preservation of order and the enforcement of discipline.\*

Finally, it may be said, in this connection, to the credit of the fascist Revolution, that the death-roll has been exceedingly small in comparison with that entailed by other great Revolutions. The total death-roll of the Revolution is little more than 4,000 ; and of these 4,000 deaths, half have been incurred by the revolutionaries themselves. The victims of the Revolution number scarcely 2,000 ! Compare the figures of the French and Russian Revolutions, and the result must be regarded as quite exceptional.†

There is another similar point, which may be cited in favour of the Fascist Revolution. The economic

\* The circular issued to the Prefects by Mussolini on his assuming office as Minister of the Interior is a document pregnant with evidence of the will of the Government to put an end to every kind of excesses.

† According to the official figures issued by the Moscow Government, there were executed over 1,800,000 persons between 1918 and 1923.

life of Italy has in no way suffered in the process. On the contrary, the country, which perhaps more than any other country suffered economically from the effects of the War, has in the interval been set magnificently on its feet again. Italy has actually recovered more rapidly and from a worse position than any other of the big European Powers involved in the Great War. The Government deficit has been converted into a surplus. The same is true of the railway budget. Inflation has ceased ; the commercial budget has greatly improved ; the value of the lira has been maintained relatively steady. Unemployment has diminished, despite a continued, remarkable decrease in emigration, and a formidable increase in the population each year by close on half a million souls—facts which point to the ability of Italian industry to absorb a rapidly increasing demand for employment, without any appreciable lowering of wages as measured by their purchasing power. Government services, too, have conspicuously bettered their efficiency ; hygiene and housing conditions have improved ; while the conditions of the working classes with respect to opportunities for recreation, to insurance against old age, invalidity, accident and unemployment, and to hours of labour, have all made distinct progress.

This is, indeed, a remarkable achievement for a Revolution. And if there are causes for Italy's rapid

recovery and present relative prosperity independent of the action and legislation of the fascist Government, no impartial observer can deny the greater part of the credit to Mussolini and his collaborators. The doing away of strikes and lock-outs, the new spirit of goodwill engendered between masters and men, the economies effected in the bureaucratic machine, the corn "campaign," the drastic collection of taxes, the comprehensive measures adopted to improve the lot of Southern Italy, are six points for which Fascism can legitimately take all the credit ; and together they account for most of the economic ground gained.

Then there is another point with which I wish to deal here and here alone. Fascism is held up by its opponents as the enemy of Liberty. The principles governing the fascist conception of Liberty will be dealt with later on in the proper place. Here I only wish to emphasise the fact that exceptional restrictions of Liberty are necessitated in revolutionary times, just as they are in war-time. A Revolution is a fight, a fight between two opposing principles for the soul of the Nation. No compromise is possible between Parties who hold diametrically opposite principles, considered as fundamentally affecting the welfare and happiness of society. Hence a revolutionary Government cannot tolerate, while the issues are still at stake, the

unrestricted propaganda of its enemies. Toleration of fundamentally adverse principles is, if we examine our consciences aright, usually due either to lack of conviction, to impotence making a virtue of necessity, or to contempt. None of these conditions apply to a revolutionary state of affairs. There would be no Revolution in the absence of conviction, there would be open civil war in the absence of authority, while contempt for the power of the enemy, when he is still in the field, would spell suicide.

Many restrictions of liberties by the fascist Government are indeed necessitated by the very nature of the case. It is the condition of every Revolution. But as soon as the yeast of the Revolution has leavened the whole country, as soon as the changes effected have become perfectly constitutionalised, many of the liberties of which citizens have been deprived will undoubtedly be restored, in exactly the same way as the Defence of the Realm Act was rescinded in England after the War. Not that this will entail a return to the liberal régime. As I have implied, the fascist conception of Liberty differs fundamentally from the liberal. Here I am merely drawing attention to the fact that it would be wrong to regard, as anti-Fascists are continually asserting, that *all* the restrictions of Liberty at present imposed in Italy are inherent in Fascism. The very idea is absurd. Anyone with the

smallest historical sense will readily concede this point.\*

It would be well for the reader to remember, too, that Fascism has contemporaneously restored many liberties to the Italian subject—for one thing, the liberty to worship God in public in accordance with the ancient customs of the people, a liberty which the former freemasonic Governments had rendered precarious. Fascism has also restored the greatest guarantee of personal freedom that we possess, the security of property. Lastly, the ordinary citizen is, I veritably believe, more concerned with his liberty to go about his ordinary business, to travel with the expectation of certainly arriving punctually at his destination and to communicate with his friends through the public services without fear of interruption, than he is about the dissemination of his political opinions in the columns of the Press or on the hustings. Those liberties at least the ordinary citizen is now assured in Italy as he has never been assured before.

\* Certain restrictions, for instance, on the liberty of the Press are, admittedly, of a temporary nature, while other measures affecting the liberty of the subject automatically lapse after a stated period of time, unless expressly renewed.

## § IV

Before passing on to my first chapter, which will deal with the historical aspects of Fascism, it may be as well to conclude this introduction with a short sketch of the principal actor in the drama, Benito Mussolini. At the same time—for this is the main purpose of the Introduction—I can continue to clear the ground for the consideration of the universal aspects of Fascism, by removing one or two further popular misconceptions of the movement.

Mussolini occupies the position of a Dictator. But the idea of dictatorship has nothing whatever to do with Fascism, either as a doctrine or as a programme. Mussolini's dictatorship is the instrument of the Revolution. When the revolutionary period comes to an end, there will be no place, properly speaking, for a Dictator in Italy. Thus, if Mussolini continues to direct the affairs of State under a perfectly constitutionalised fascist régime, he may still dominate, by his ability, his personality, his prestige, but he will cease to dominate by virtue of his office, as leader of the fascist revolutionary organisation, whose word at present is law. As Prime Minister he would still occupy a position of commanding authority, for the motto which Fascism has substituted for the "Liberty,

## INTRODUCTION

Equality, Fraternity" of revolutionary France, is *Responsibility, Hierarchy and Discipline*.\* Under the new laws the Prime Minister will be a vastly more important person than he was under the liberal régime. The restoration of the principle of State authority will be shown to be one of the main, if not the main, feature of the fascist Revolution, and the Prime Minister will stand at the apex of the hierarchy of the State executive. Nevertheless above him there will stand the King, with reinforced and clearly defined prerogatives, placing certain constitutional bounds to the power of the Prime Minister. Nor will the King's prerogatives be the only constitutional checks. There will be others, forming a balance of powers, such as would commend itself to the most exacting of constitutional lawyers. So there will be no dictatorship when the revolutionary period is over. Fascism does not stand for a dictatorship, neither of a person nor of a class. It is a movement which in no sense may be called reactionary, however much it may insist on the importance of State authority. It is of the greatest importance, if Fascism is to be rightly understood, to distinguish between the two notions. If there is a dictatorship in Italy now, it is because the revolutionary organisation has taken this form by an accident of history.

\* Cf. Emilio Brodero, *Vittorie Dottrinali del Fascismo*, (Biblioteca dell' Istituto Fascista di Cultura in Milano, 1926).

The accident in question is the presence of a genius, a man of the people, with that medium-like gift of intuitioning and interpreting the vast subconscious ideals of historical Italy dormant in the heart of every true Italian. This, I believe, is the secret of his success, this and his passionate sincerity and disinterestedness. The Italian adores a saint who shows himself to be no fool either to boot.

Nobody will deny that Mussolini has a remarkably practical head on his shoulders ; he is a born organiser with big sweeps of ideas coupled with a ready power of grasping and ordering detail. He has immense powers of work and concentration. His versatility is astonishing. He has the gift of a fine, economical, Michael-Angelesque eloquence, which, together with his exuberant personal magnetism is of the stuff that leads men and multitudes. All these talents even his enemies concede him. Nor will anyone deny him a prodigious tenacity of will, great courage, a rare capacity for learning from experience, and the power of swift decision at the psychological moment, coupled with an acute instinct for judging the psychological moment.

Nevertheless, a very erroneous opinion of him appears to have been conceived abroad. I am not referring to those caricatures which represent him as a pinchbeck Napoleon, a glorified mountebank or a reduced edition of the Renaissance tyrant of the kidney

of Eccelino da Romano.\* There are also serious people who appreciate his unquestionable genius, but represent him as a materialist, or as a monster of egoism and of personal ambition, or place him in the same category of selfish, albeit glorious adventurers, as they place Napoleon. Mr. Maynard Keynes, in that admirable essay of his, *A Short View of Russia*, published last year by the Hogarth Press, appears to take something of these views. He places Trotsky, Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mr. Baldwin, each in his way, amongst the most religious of men. He appears unwilling to add Mussolini to this list and thereby falls into a vulgar error. The passage referred to (in the Preface to Mr. Keynes' Essay) comes immediately after the following sentences : "There are two distinct sublimations of materialistic egotism—one in which the ego is merged in the nameless mystic union, another in which it is merged in the pursuit of an ideal life for the whole community of men." But that such is the pursuit of Mussolini is not only my own conviction, who know him, but the conviction of everyone, unexceptionally, who has had to do with him, the conviction which is at the root of the people's love for him. In this his psyche differs profoundly from Napoleon's.

\* Cf. A recent effusion of Mr. H. G. Wells, which, were it not for the wide reputation gained by Mr. Wells as a popular and distinguished novelist, no self-respecting publisher would consider worthy of reproduction.

All great men of action hold in common certain qualities, such as have been enumerated above. What is more interesting are their differences, their individual character and their moral outlook. In these respects Mussolini and Napoleon are at opposite poles. If both share certain national characteristics, such as the complexity of the Italian mind, the Italian sense of realism, the one is a typical Romagnol, the other a typical Corsican—and one of the pleasant facts about Italy is the divergence of character that exists between Province and Province. The Corsican is outwardly cold, too often calculating, little susceptible to the influences of Art, of Religion, of others' personalities ; and he has little sense of humour. The Romagnol has a great, palpitating human heart, a very keen sense of humour, is generous to a fault, is dangerously susceptible to outside influences. The Corsican makes an implacable enemy, the Romagnol makes loyal, life-long friendships.

If Mussolini has a weakness, it is his susceptibility to personal influences. He may judge fallen human nature pretty shrewdly in the mass ; but he has the impulse to go out to meet the best in each individual with whom he comes in contact, and the realisation of the good in each is apt to obscure for him the bad. He is too apt to judge others by his own generous self. He will readily forgive an injury, readily excuse an apparent disloyalty ; too often for the sake of an old

friendship he will give a man another chance, who has let him badly down. Napoleon, never. Mussolini is well aware of this weakness. Bitter experience has taught him to be on his guard against it. But there it is, the defect of a quality, which we would not wish away. For if Napoleon was loved because he could intoxicate men's minds, as he led them up to share with him and through him the exhilaration and glory of his achievements, Mussolini is loved because he loves.

Napoleon was the centre of his universe ; God is the centre of Mussolini's. He exults in the feeling that the whole of him is being used, the whole of his mortal self used up, for the cause in which he believes. His constant prayer is, "O, my God, let me perish if thereby Italy may be made great in the eyes of the world and in Thine eyes," and, "forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive them that trespass against me." For he knows that the path to Heaven of the statesman is only too often paved but with good intentions. The end does not justify the means ; but when all is contingent, the lesser evil has often to be chosen. But if evil has always to be hated, what then ? Courage to go on notwithstanding and faith in God's mercy. That is the attitude of Mussolini in the face of the practical problems of life : a deep consciousness of good and evil, a great sense of responsibility and realisation of the fallibility of human judgment in the choice of

worthy means ; hence a continual self-criticism and self-martyrdom, which, if it were not for his faith, his sense of duty to his vocation, and his moral courage, would drive him to a contemplative life. Not Napoleon but, rather, St. Ignatius is Mussolini's spiritual companion.

Every day he grows in wisdom and moral stature. The quality of consistency in the character of anyone is to be judged rather by a consistent evolution of his ideas than by a fixity of opinions. This is especially true of a man of action, whose practical Philosophy comes to maturity and clarity in the course of acquired experience, intensified by the burden of responsibility when it comes to him.

Mussolini, who began his life as a Socialist, has passed through many stages of opinion in the course of his evolution. But his evolution may be likened to an ascending straight line. This is his true consistency ; and it would be absurd to quote any stage of his past, even of his comparatively recent past, against his present.

The same may be said of the political doctrines underlying Fascism. Fascism never possessed a ready-made Philosophy. It arose as a Party of action. Its aims at first appeared obscure to the ordinary man in the street, apart from the immediate aim of re-establishing the authority of the State. Consequently, recruits joined the movement in the beginning from every kind of source ; or many others, for fear of committing

themselves to the unknown, held themselves aloof. But very gradually at first, more swiftly after the march on Rome, the true significance of the movement became clearer, with the result that many of the first recruits, when they were honest, had no alternative but to abandon it ; while others, with their original doubts removed, took their place. Its significance has now emerged into the full light of day. Mussolini, in the course of his own latter-day evolution, as he clarified his own ideas, clarified them also for the whole Party and made them finally a consistent whole. This entailed a continuous scrapping of impure doctrinal ingredients, and at the same time, independently of those who, of their own will, left the movement, a continuous scrapping of impure human elements—a most difficult, ungrateful task, requiring infinite judgment, firmness and tact, and carried out only at the cost of much heart-burning, disappointment and worry. This has been Mussolini's passion ; but it has also been his schooling. He has suffered in a way which it is difficult to exaggerate from the moral failings of others, many of whom he had reckoned as his friends, men who betrayed him and his best hopes by their self-seeking, their envy, their shallowness. But hereby he himself has come to understand, in a way which five years ago perhaps he only dimly grasped, that the only way to serve one's country best is to serve God first.

PART I

## CHAPTER I

### FASCISM IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORY

FASCISM may be defined generally as a political and social movement having as its object the re-establishment of a political and social order, based upon the main current of traditions that have formed our European civilisation, traditions created by Rome, first by the Empire and subsequently by the Catholic Church. Conversely, Fascism may be described as the repudiation of that individualist mentality that found expression first in the Pagan Renaissance, then in the Reformation and later in the French Revolution, not to speak of the Industrial Revolution, which issued in "Capitalism,"\* itself the product of the Reformation.†

*General  
Definition  
of Fascism.*

Thus, according to our definition, which has Mussolini's sanction, the accusation made by certain persons that Fascism, in its defence of the Church and its restoration of Religion to a place of honour in

\* Cf. footnote, defining "Capitalism," on p. 12 of the Introduction.

† Cf. Curzio Suckert, *L'Europa Vivente*, (Valecchi, Florence, 1923).

the State, is acting from purely opportunistic motives, falls to the ground.

In order to be quite clear, what is meant by "opportunistic motives?" They are three: First, that by defending the Church with its wide-flung influence, Italy may be enabled to spread her influence, too.\* Secondly, that, by upholding Religion, the cause of Fascism may gain the popular support of Italian Catholics, who form the vast majority of the population.† Thirdly, the mere appreciation of the fact that Religion is a powerful aid in the maintenance of social order, in the disciplining of men's selfish appetites and in instilling in them the virtue of self-sacrifice.

Although the above definition is an accurate one, nevertheless there is a universal aspect of Fascism independent, in a certain sense, of the Roman tradition. What I mean to say is simply this: that, although Japan, for instance, is in no sense an heir to Rome, nevertheless Japan, while maintaining her own traditions, might yet be, in a certain sense, a fascist State. This point will be dealt with later. It is sufficient for the reader to bear it in mind, lest he

\* Compare official atheist France's patronage of French Catholic Schools and Missions abroad, the while discouraging Catholic action at home.

† Compare the Catholic policy of Napoleon III., who sought thereby to gain the Catholic vote.

should, at this stage, draw too absolute conclusions from my definition.

Every acute and sensitive observer in Italy as far back as 1911,\* or even earlier, was aware of the extraordinary vitality of the Italian people of this generation, and was consequently on the alert to see what was to be the outcome of it. He must also have been aware of three and increasingly growing movements; a revival of Catholic life, Syndicalism and Nationalism—three movements which prepared the ground for the advent of Fascism.

The revival of Catholic life had no leanings towards Clericalism, which may be defined as a political order wherein the influence of the Priest predominates, nor yet towards Ultramontanism (the aim of which was the restoration of Rome in full sovereignty to the Pope—a term which explains itself, in that all its principal advocates lived beyond the Alps).

Catholic opinion, after the taking of Rome in 1870, took a long time to become absorbed into the new

*The Immediate Antecedents of Fascism.*

*The Revival of Catholic Life.*

\* I fix on the date 1911, because it was in that year that I first intuited something of what was to follow; and this intuition I found was shared by numbers of Italians, standing outside politics, with whom I came in contact in the course of my wanderings throughout the peninsula. It was the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the unification of Italy.

State ; for Catholics were torn at first in their allegiance, or, more accurately, Catholic opinion was rendered impotent for some time (especially before the relaxation, by Pius X., of the ban contained in the Papal Decree *Non Expedit*, which formally prohibited Catholics from taking part in parliamentary elections),\* owing to the distraction caused by the fears entertained for the Papacy as a result of the fall of the temporal power. Only gradually, as it was realised that the Church was in no sense weakened by the change, in spite of the highly unsatisfactory and anomalous position in which the Pope has been placed by the wholly inadequate and purely unilateral Italian Law of Guarantees, and, finally, by the destruction of the Austrian Empire, the stronghold of the Ultramontanes, did it become possible for Catholic opinion fully to re-assert itself. Meanwhile, the anti-Catholic Freemasons, the Positivists, the Hedonists, the Materialists, had had a long run for their money. They had dominated the State for close on two generations ; but despite the religious vacuum they had sought to create in the heyday of their opportunity, the people had maintained their faith. No sooner, therefore, did the Catholics begin to find themselves again, than their influences grew and grew. Already in 1911

\* The ban was finally removed altogether by Benedict XV.

there were vivid signs of their coming triumph, which signified also the triumph of tradition.\*

Secondly, Syndicalism, before the War, was of the red variety, preparing the ground for the day when the factories would come to be handed over *Syndicalism*. to the workers without compensation to the owners, and the Red Syndicalist Republic proclaimed. Associated with the socialist party, it shared, at first, with the latter its materialistic view of life and paid homage to the name of Marx. Socialism, however, by 1911 was showing signs of losing ground to Syndicalism ; and Syndicalism itself was changing. Sorel had become its prophet ; Corridoni had become its most inspiring leader, Corridoni who was afterwards killed in France, while serving with an Italian voluntary contingent before Italy herself entered the War. Syndicalism indeed was becoming less internationalist, less materialist. The Mazzinian idealism of the Republican party, whose stronghold was big-hearted Romagna, was affecting it.

\* I am not concerned here with a chronicle of events, or it would be necessary to give some account of the birth of the Catholic Party, as distinct from the general revival of Catholic life ; the development of the Catholic Party into the Popular Party, which became, after the War, the strongest organised Party after the Socialists ; its moral degeneration in competition with the Socialists, together with its inoculation with the virus of Internationalism and Democratism (a definition of which will be given in due course) ; its split into two sections after the advent of Fascism, resulting in the absorption of the national and conservative elements by Fascism and the wandering in the wilderness of the remainder.

It had already become apparent that there was a sane side to Syndicalism ; it had become apparent that a Syndicalism could exist which need deny neither Religion, nor Patriotism, nor Justice to the owners of property. Syndicalism, away from any special application of the term, may indeed be described as an effort to give the wage-earner a property interest in his industry and so a sense of responsibility for the well-being of that industry. As such, it is a movement instinct with the Roman, the Catholic tradition.

Modern industry necessitates the employment of large bodies of men as wage-earners ; but the Traditionalist, ever since the great mediæval civilisation which was the outcome of the Christianisation of the Roman Empire, with difficulty acquiesces in the position of a mere wage-earner. This is particularly so in the case of the Italian ; for Italy has remained the heart of the Roman, the Catholic tradition, as being the home of the Papacy and the country nearest to the fountain head of the traditions that moulded Europe.

Some solution by which, for the masses, the sense of property may be reconciled with the requirements of modern industry, has accordingly long been a markedly instinctive desire in the hearts of modern Italians. Property means Liberty in the best, concrete sense. The protection which Fascism gives to property and the encouragement which it gives to the worker who



HIS EXCELLENCY SIGNOR ALFREDO ROCCO,  
*Minister of Justice.*

owns his own means of livelihood, has contributed much to the popularity of Fascism ; for there exists, in Italy, a very large proportion of the people who remain their own masters.\* The average Italian would far prefer to be relatively poor, but his own master, than relatively rich and at the beck and call of another. Fascism would defend and encourage this healthy inclination. Fascist economic policy is, in fact, a moderate, realistic "Distributism." But it recognises that in the struggle for existence between States in the modern world a place must be found for the great industries within the national economy. These also must be encouraged and at the same time a solution found for the present invidious position of the wage-earner.

Fascism, however, has the good sense to realise, too, that there is no simple solution of the problem, no short cut to Utopia. Much depends on creating, first, the proper moral state of mind in both masters and men. Much, therefore, depends on gradual education and judicious propaganda. Moreover, each industry in its particular circumstances must solve the problem,

\* According to the census of 1921, nearly fifty per cent. of the population belong to the following classes : small and great agricultural proprietors ; mezzadri (who have a co-operative interest in the land and great security of tenure) ; owners of small and large shops, stores, workshops or factories ; artisans owning their own tools ; persons deriving their sole income from investments or pensions ; and professional men, who have chosen their vocation largely from the love of the work itself.

largely for itself, and in different ways ; there can be no cut-and-dried scheme applicable to all and sundry. There are lessons to be learnt from innumerable and diverse sources, such as experiments in co-operation, guild organisation, co-partnership, profit-sharing, workers' investment schemes, etc., etc. Progress must be effected slowly as experience dictates. Finally, much depends on organisation ; and the creation of the great fascist Corporations of Employers and Employees, a description of which will be given in the second part of this book, the institution of Labour Courts and the promulgation of the fascist "Labour Charter," have already laid the foundations of a new economic order, both national and traditional in spirit, which it would not be amiss to call "Fascist Syndicalism" ; and it is confidently expected that, through these organisations, the desired solutions will eventually be found.

I now come to the consideration of Nationalism, a *National-ism* movement requiring careful analysis, if we wish to avoid misunderstandings and gauge its import.

Before analysing, however, the various meanings of the term "Nationalism," let us consider for a moment the meaning of such terms as "State," "Nation," "Race," "Empire," and trace in broad outline the origins of the great national States of Europe to-day, which arose out of the wreck of the Roman Empire.

Such a survey will exemplify the traditionalist character of fascist Nationalism.

A State may be deemed that system of Government, administration and laws, the supreme authority of which is recognised by a body of men, a *Nation* or group of Nations. This is the special meaning of the term "State" that we find frequently adopted by eminent writers. In this sense, it was scarcely an exaggeration when an absolute monarch like Louis XIV. of France declared: "L'Etat, c'est moi."

On the other hand, in common usage, the term "State" signifies something broader ; it is identified with the community which recognises the supreme authority of a particular system of Government, administration and laws. Both definitions, in my opinion, should be allowed to stand. The two ideas reciprocally imply each other, and we can safely leave it to the context to prevent any confusion of thought.

We may say accordingly that a national *National States and Imperial States* State is one with authority over a single Nation ; an Imperial State one with authority over a group of Nations or a heterogeneous assortment of peoples.

A "Nation" must not be confused with "Race." Nor is it merely the sum of individuals, composing a body politic at a given moment and recognising the authority of the State. If this were so,

the easily-understood term "body politic" could be substituted for the more subtle term "Nation." A "Nation" is much more than this. "It is that living, moral entity, which, though composed of individuals, transcends the scope and life of its components, identifying itself with the history and finalities of an uninterrupted series of generations. It is a moral entity, since it is composed of human beings; for man is not solely matter, and the ends of the human species, far from being the materialistic ones we have in common with other animals, are, rather, and predominantly, the spiritual finalities which are peculiar to man and which every form of society strives to attain as well as its stage of development allows. It is an entity with a unity brought about by common traditions among the people that compose it, traditions formed in the course of time owing to the pervasion of a variety of influences (*not all of which, however, need be present*), such as community of topographical and climatic conditions, of language, race, culture, religion, laws, customs, history, feelings and volitions, economic interests and territory having clearly marked geographical boundaries."\*

\* Cf. the speech delivered by His Excellency, Alfredo Rocco, Italian Minister of Justice, delivered at Perugia on 30th August, 1925, published in an English version by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, October, 1926; and included in the work by the same author, *La Trasformazione dello Stato* (Libreria della "Voce," Florence, 1927).

By "Race" I mean the various ethnographical groups of which society is formed.

An "Empire" is a group of Nations or peoples recognising the authority of an Imperial State.

To give examples: modern Greece is a Nation, united by common traditions based on a community of language, race, religion and other factors. Switzerland is also a Nation, though composed of different races, speaking different languages and practising different religions. It is united, however, by common traditions of history, topographical conditions, etc., etc. Thus, too, the Greek Nation recognises the authority of the Greek State; the Swiss Nation that of the Swiss State or Confederation of States (Swiss and Cantonal Government, administration and laws). Again, France is both a Nation and an Empire, a national State and an imperial State, with its far-flung subject Nations and peoples. Britain is likewise a Nation and an Empire, a national State and an imperial State, associated, into the bargain, with a number of national sister States, who share, with the Mother-country, some portion of the burden and privileges of the imperial State.

A city State or a tribal State might be held, in certain circumstances, to fall under the above definition of a national State. But this would contrast with ordinary usage, because of its primitive character. Hence I shall reserve the term

*Race.*

*Empire.*

*City States and Tribal States.*

"national" State as applying to relatively large national units only, and use the terms "city" or "tribal" State to denote a distinct class, differentiated by common sense.

The growth and integration of a national State characterises political progress, as distinct from social progress;

*Political and Social Progress.* for these two kinds of progress need by no means march hand in hand. Thus, where we

have an Empire, political progress is a process of assimilation of the various Nations or peoples composing that Empire. Similarly, an Empire exhibits political decadence when the various Nations or peoples composing that Empire tend to break away and become independent societies recognising separate States of their own. Germany is an example of a politically progressive imperial system : for the German Empire, the German Imperial State, has by now practically become a single German Nation, a purely national State. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, on the other hand, was throughout the nineteenth century in a decadent condition. The British Empire appears, too, at first sight, to be decadent in this sense ; but the appearance may very likely prove illusory ; for the conditions of the British Empire are peculiar, owing to the founding of colonies of British men and women in empty spaces overseas, and to its great geographical diversity. Britain, indeed, is conducting a momentous experiment in developing independent national sister

States out of her Empire, sister States for whom there is every good hope of remaining sisters and of working up, in the generations to come, their joint association with the Mother-country into a higher national and imperial unity. It is not merely a question of State decentralisation, a policy which many Empires, including Rome, have profitably practised before Britain. It is something quite new in the history of the world. Whether she will succeed in converting India, however, into an independent national State, desirous of remaining within the Empire and of working up eventually into a higher unity with her sisters, is, it must be confessed, extremely problematical. Great Britain has not exhibited a great talent for assimilation, a talent wherein the Latin Nations appear, rather, to excel ; and the success of Britain's task in India would seem to depend much on the power of assimilation.\*

The Latin talent for assimilation was exhibited in a remarkable degree by ancient Rome. The Roman Empire, embracing, at first, countless Nations and peoples, had, in its prime, *The Roman Empire.* practically transformed itself into a single Roman Nation. Not altogether, however. The process was never quite completed. Two big divisions

\* Cf. Britain's notable failure hitherto, after centuries of domination, to assimilate Ireland, in spite of the conquest of Ireland by the English language, and the large community of interests, not to speak of the geographical unity, of the two islands.

remained, the Latin and the Greek, besides a number of minor ones ; and in this connection it is interesting to note that in the Church, which is the heir to ancient Rome, a survival of the various unassimilated Nations that composed the Roman Empire at the time of its decay is preserved to this day in her various rites.\* So, when the Empire declined, it inevitably split along the lines traced where the process of assimilation had ended, and there became two Romes, the Rome of Romulus and the Rome of Constantine.

The Roman Empire may thus be considered the prototype of the great imperial State, and, for us Westerners, the prototype also of the great national State. It was a vital organism distinguished by its unity in variety, the firm foundation on which our European civilisation has been built, the mother of us all. Its vast extent, its pre-eminent civilisation, its dominating strength, its long duration, gave it a prestige which outlasted its concrete existence. Before its virtual demise it had already become Christian, so that

*The Holy Roman Empire.* Catholic and Roman in ordinary parlance had become interchangeable terms ;† and out of it there grew, in the West, the Holy

\* The Latin rite and the Greek rite correspond, of course, to the main divisions into which the Empire fell, the Armenian and Coptic rites, etc., to those Nations of the Eastern Empire which had not been perfectly assimilated by the Greek civilisation.

† Cf. James Bryce's masterpiece, *The Holy Roman Empire*, (MacMillan & Co., London, revised edition, 1922).

Roman Empire, at first a concrete fact under Charlemagne, but gradually to become little more than an outward form and an aspiration. In theory it continued to exist right down to the Napoleonic era, long, long after its very shadow had become obscured ; and it continued to exist thus because the hearts of men turned back with longing, as in a dream, to the time when all civilisation was united under a single paternal Government ; a past to which men clung as if reluctant to give up the hope of one day reconstituting the unity they had lost. This was especially so among those peoples who had remained Catholic ; for the spiritual side of the great Empire had not only never decayed, but on the contrary had grown from strength to strength and spread its wings to the uttermost corners of the earth.

Now, as the Roman State decayed (and this is particularly true of the Western half of the Empire, where, with the removal of the seat of the Empire to Constantinople, political decay was both earlier and more thorough), the central heart ceased to beat out the life-blood required to nourish the body politic ; and since the Western Roman world had been practically assimilated into a single Nation during the preceding period of political progress, the decay here could not take the form of a mere split-up into national States, for more than one,

*The Decline of Rome.*

the Roman one, there could hardly be said to exist. So decay took the form, rather, of a slow sinking into *The Dark Ages*. civil chaos, relieved from time to time and locally by the strong rule of some forceful viceroy or condottiere. These were the "Dark Ages." But gradually, out of the dark, came the light, the great mediaeval civilisation, the product of *The Middle Ages*. feudalism and the city State (the latter itself a tradition from the ancient world), into which society had crystallised anew by a process of adaptation to the conditions inherent in a Nation wherein the State had abdicated its authority. The Roman Empire as a State had virtually ceased, although the outward form of it survived and its prestige still held, especially in Germany and in Italy, where the Pope and the Emperor held their Courts. The sway of the Church was predominant, however, and gave to the whole a spiritual unity, which, in turn, helped to keep alive the fiction as well as the ideal of civil unity.

Politically, Europe, taken as a whole, had markedly regressed, as compared with the great days of the Empire, however much she may have picked up again in comparison with the darkest years of the Dark Ages. But Christianity, the while, had worked a social miracle, a social transformation. Mediæval social conditions, considered independently of political conditions, represented undoubtedly a marked advance on Roman social

conditions.\* So, whereas Europe had decayed politically, she had advanced socially ; and this social advance, carrying with it a rich harvest of intellectual and artistic achievements, economic development and comparative security, brought about in turn a new impulse towards political progress.

In the outlying portions of the Empire, or of what had formerly constituted the Empire, in Spain, in France, in England, for example, this impulse was particularly favoured. The aspiration towards reconstituting the Empire as a reality was here less strongly felt and realised more and more clearly as an impracticable dream. Consequently the impulse towards political progress caused gradually to come into existence among these outlying peoples, where a certain homogeneity of language, race and economic interests had in the course of time become established and where the tradition of the city State was weaker, local political unities that transcended the fief and the city, and finally engendered a number of national States, which, some sooner, some later, broke loose altogether from the idea of the Empire, made themselves the centre of their peculiar aspirations and developed into the corresponding great national States of to-day.

*The Rise of Modern National States.*

\* Cf. Alfredo Oriani's great work in three volumes, *La Lotta Politica in Italia*, (Libreria della "Voce," Florence, 1917).

At the centre of things, on the other hand, the impulse towards political progress was less favoured, chiefly because it was there that the form of the Empire still persisted in a visible manner, where the prestige of the Empire and the surviving sense of Roman nationality was still so strongly felt that men continued vainly to aspire to the Empire's reconstruction. The idea of the universal Catholic State, the Roman State, with its local municipal organisation, that had once comprised, and, as it was fondly hoped, was destined again to comprise, the whole of civilisation, overshadowed the narrower national State idea. Political progress was accordingly less marked (though by no means stagnant), for having aspired too high.

Nevertheless, small regional States did indeed form themselves, in Italy often quasi-national or else in the shape of miniature Empires, with a city State at their head, like Venice, or like Florence, which gradually absorbed Tuscany, or like the Papal States ; while, in the Germanies, either the same phenomenon occurred, or, more often, regional States grew out of the feudal system without transcending it, and in central Europe a local imperial system, a concrete Empire in the very lap of the ideal Holy Roman Empire, formed out of a group of such regional States, under the ægis of the Austrian Monarchy, came also gradually into being. This Austrian Empire, in fact, may be regarded as the

extent to which the aspiration to reconstitute the Romua Empire had succeeded. But it was a barbarous production, incapable of assimilating the more cultured peoples of Italy or of satisfying the Italian imperial ideal. Throughout its history, it was characterised by arrested growth, and ever contained within itself the germs of decay. Further East, the Turkish conquest had meantime laid a dead hand on what had once been Byzantium.

Then, bit by bit, as the Western national States consolidated their power, they too began to develop imperial tendencies, imperial tendencies, however, which in no way sought to recreate the old imperial unity ; and Italy, who had failed to form either a new imperial system for herself or to crystallise into a united modern national State, became the contested prize of all her neighbours. Europe became the battlefield of large rival States, each struggling for ascendancy. The Pagan Renaissance left behind it a sorry legacy of cynicism. Right became identified with Might, and lust for power and glory the driving ambition of rulers. The consequence was the oppression of the people by their rulers on the one hand, the failure to achieve any further political progress on the other. Domination, not assimilation, became the acknowledged end of Empire and whole Nations were callously handed over from one domination to another,

*The Pagan Renaissance.*

bartered away, sold or partitioned, without any regard for the proper ends of society. Religion was a decaying force and with its decay social conditions decayed everywhere too. Nor have we succeeded in regaining the social ground lost during those fateful centuries which culminated in the French Revolution.

This great upheaval was the revolt of the French people against what had indeed become an intolerable

*The French Revolution.* condition of affairs. In so far as it was this, it was healthy enough. It was a

heaven-sent punishment on the heads of those in authority, who had forgotten their very *raison d'être*, the promotion of the welfare of the whole people over whom they ruled. It was a morally legitimate breaking of the privileged class-system into which the State had degenerated, and it undoubtedly resulted in a number of permanent conquests for the cause of civilisation. The world badly needed a breath of Liberty and it was in the name of Liberty that the Revolution was made.

The political Philosophy, however, which fed the revolutionary movement was still the child of the cynical, individualistic, purely rationalistic atmosphere of the eighteenth century, tempered only by the thin broth of Humanitarianism. Though it had power to destroy, though it provoked the stimulus required to enable peoples to throw off the yoke of self-seeking rulers, it had no

power to construct a healthy State system in the place of the old one. It merely cleared the ground for some other order to take its place, for better or for worse. It hastened rather than arrested the catastrophic course taken by Europe in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, of which the epilogue was the Great War.

The revolutionary and Napoleonic wars—to pick up again the thread of our argument—spread the ideas of the Revolution all over Europe. Napoleon himself blew the last vestige of the Holy Roman imperial shadow into smoke and thereby relieved central Europe of an incubus. Thus were created, at last, the conditions which led to the establishment of modern national States in Italy and Germany, and, with the decay of the Austrian and Turkish Empires, to the establishment of various other national States out of their respective components. The late Great War is really, in effect, the end of a chapter, the beginning of which was the decay of Rome. Europe has been finally split up into national unities. Within the confines of Europe there practically exist no more Empires. The great power of assimilation which Rome exhibited has delayed, even till this day, the complete reconstruction of Europe in accordance with differentiated national groups. It still remains a question whether the legacy of traditions which Rome

19th-Century Nationalism.

left behind her and still survive, are sufficient to form a cement strong enough to bind these national groups together again into one genuine political unity. Fascism would answer : *Yes, but on the one condition that these various national groups, before it is too late, recant the political and religious heresies, which have deformed the true traditions. Europe, it affirms, can only be re-united on the basis of the Roman tradition. Reinforce this great common tradition—the only common tradition—by a general conformation to the Roman political and religious traditions, and we may yet have good reason to hope.*

\* \* \* \*

This historical sketch is necessarily a very summary one ; but I think it brings out pretty clearly the main facts for my purpose. An important point to remember, in connection with it, is that nineteenth-century European Nationalism, and with it the Italian Risorgimento, was largely nourished on and found its stimulus from the doctrines of Liberalism. This alliance, however, nay, confusion between Nationalism and Liberalism was of an entirely accidental nature, owing to the fact that the latter, being the dominating political tendency of the times, constituted a trump card for the Nationalists to play in their efforts to weaken the resistance of those Powers, whose continual existence depended on the preservation of the territorial *statu quo*. The Nationalism, on the other hand, which could be

seen to be stirring in Italy in the years preceding the War, was of a different kind. It was a Nationalism completely severed from Liberalism, of which Corradini may be regarded as the founder, one that looked back for its inspiration on ancient Rome. Like the Nationalism which characterised the political progress following the mediæval era, it had laid hold of the truth that large, thoroughly assimilated national States are a measure of political progress ; and it sought, accordingly, to make Italy a genuinely united land. In this sense it repudiated the Middle Ages. Italy had been made, but the Italians as a genuinely united people had still to be made. It therefore laid great stress on the juristic and religious traditions of the Nation ; proclaimed once more the principle of State authority, which Liberalism had undermined ; and repudiated the agnostic State, which clashed with the cherished traditions of Italians and made for disunity. More particularly did it enter the lists against the international gospel of the Socialists. It was this Nationalism which Fascism caught up into itself, purified, developed and made its own.

Descending to analysis, there are three chief meanings to the word " Nationalism," two of which are, when translated into practice, morally justifiable, one of which is not. Italian Nationalism, before the War, was not altogether free from the implications of the third

*Italian Nationalism before the War.*

*Three Meanings of Nationalism.*

meaning, which was made in Germany. German *Kultur* tended then to dominate the universities of Europe. The influence of Hegel, to choose the most eminent of the German philosophers, whose philosophy led to the exaltation of the third type of Nationalism, was very rampant in Italy ; and although his Italian disciples had already transformed his theories into something less pernicious, although Corradini himself had nothing in him of the Teuton, the taint remained. The taint remains, though fast disappearing, among even a certain set of self-styled Fascists of this day ; and it is still important for students of Fascism to be on their guard against taking the utterances of this group, who propound doctrines similar to those advocated by Charles Maurras and the *Action Francaise*, as representing the fascist movement. I am not referring so much to the Italian neo-Hegelians themselves, least of all to Professor Gentile, who would be the first to repudiate Charles Maurras, as to the less instructed nationalist enthusiasts, who, not as philosophical students, but as men of the world, have been inoculated unconsciously by the political fruits of Hegelism, long after (as is the wont of men of the world !) such doctrines have become worn out, old-fashioned *vieux jeux* among thinking men.

I will now analyse the three meanings of Nationalism, so that there should be no mistake about it ; and

to this end I cannot do better than paraphrase at length passages from that wonderful little book, already referred to, *Une Opinion sur Charles Maurras et le Devoir Catholique*, by Jacques Maritain.

1. Nationalism may simply mean—in opposition to the humanitarian myths—that the Nation, taken as synonymous with the terms *civitas* or *fatherland*, is the highest natural social unity.

2. Or it may mean—in opposition to the fallacious individualistic conception of society—that the common good is “more divine,” as Aristotle and St. Thomas\* lay down, than the individual good ; and that it is something by nature different from the simple sum or collection of individual goods ; that natural law enjoins on us (as indeed also the 4th Commandment) to love the good of the fatherland more than our own private interests.

This meaning of Nationalism in no sense implies any consent to the doctrine of *Racism*, which holds that unity of racial origin is the main principle of unity for civil society and that the members of each ethnical branch should properly aim at grouping themselves together into so many national States. Although it is desirable that strongly-felt national aspirations, which often depend on community of race, should be satisfied,

\* Summa Theol., 2, 2<sup>ae</sup>, q. 31, art. 3 ad 2<sup>um</sup>.

as far as this may be compatible with justice, *Racism* or the Principle of Racial Self-determination, as it has been called in recent years, is a materialistic illusion, contrary to natural law and destructive of civilisation. It is the *reductio ad absurdum* of Nationalism ; any truly logical application of it is farcical and impracticable.\*

\* The principle of Self-determination, in any sense—whether racial or national—can only be admitted as a very secondary principle in the determination of State frontiers, even if it can be admitted at all. The reason why it can only be admitted as a secondary principle, if at all, is that we must necessarily first define our area within which the principle is to be applied, before we can even begin to apply it ; and on the definition of this area, which must depend on other principles, will depend the practical results of self-determination.

Take, for instance, the old Irish question. Had Ireland or any portion of Ireland any right to secede ? Imagine this question put to the test of a plebiscite, as, in effect, it was. What area is to be chosen for the plebiscite ? If we take the larger geographical unity, which is the British Isles, the result of the plebiscite would be the sacrifice of the vast majority of Irish opinion. If we restrict the plebiscite to the lesser geographical unity, which is Ireland, on the other hand, we sacrifice, in the first place, the claim of the English, the Welsh and the Scots, whose interests may be very deeply affected by the question, to have any say in the matter ; in the second place, we sacrifice the scattered unionist minorities in Southern Ireland and the compact unionist element in the North. If the vote were taken likewise in the separate historical divisions of Ulster, Munster, Leinster and Connaught, we should get the same unsatisfactory result. But if the vote were taken by counties, only four counties would contract to remain within the United Kingdom ; and that being so, would they not, for economic reasons, soon repent of their action ? Again, if the vote were taken by parishes, we should get a still different result. Or we should get different results again if the vote were taken on the question limited by certain guarantees. As it is, with, in effect, two simple plebiscites, choosing as our areas what are now Southern and Northern Ireland, we have, in the result, first sacrificed the general opinion of the other British Island, we have then sacrificed the opinion of Southern Ireland

3. The third sense in which the term " Nationalism " may be used is the corrupt form of its legitimate meaning. It then signifies the blind worship of the Nation, taken as something superior to all moral or religious Law,—that kind of Nationalism which is in opposition to God and to the Kingdom of God—the cult of the Nation-God or State-God.

Fascism has definitely repudiated this interpretation and is in course of rejecting from its ranks those who would identify Fascism with this reprehensible idea. Fascism regards God as the only true sovereign, and as Alfredo Rocco, Minister of Justice, has authoritatively declared,\* " the fascist State must defend and diffuse

and finally we have done violence to the principle itself along the whole border. Where, indeed, is the process to stop ? What, indeed, is the blessed principle at all, when it comes to be analysed ? Surely one that becomes immediately resolved into a number of others, involving questions of geography, economics, convenience, justice and common sense. In these circumstances, need it ever be invoked ? Maybe the present Irish solution is a good one. But it is not a good one merely because the majority in Northern Ireland are for the Union and the majority in Southern Ireland are for the Free State. For, on the same principle, it could be considered a bad one, because the majority of the British Isles are for the Union, because the majority of Ireland are for the Free State, because the majority of Ulster are for the Free State, because the majority of two of the counties forming part of Northern Ireland are against the Union—and so on. No. If the present solution is a good one, it is because it has brought useless blood-shed, at least for the time being, to an end, without doing violence to the unity of the British Empire, which is the most important of all the unities involved.

\* Alfredo Rocco, *La Trasformazione dello Stato*, (Libreria della " Voce," Florence, 1927).

morality among the People, must occupy itself with religious problems and so confess and safeguard the true Religion, which is the Catholic Religion," the Religion, whose whole history is characterised by an unceasing struggle against all attempts of the civil power to pass God by.

To sum up, Fascism is no improvisation. It has immediate historical antecedents in the three movements :

*Summary.* the revival of Catholic life, Syndicalism and Corradini's Nationalism, already growing from strength to strength before the War.\* It has gathered these three movements together, purified them and harmonised them. Its roots lie in the historical traditions of the Italian people (traditions which all Europe in a greater or lesser degree shares), so much so that nothing could be truer than the following remark by Harold E. Goad, Secretary of the British Institute in Florence, taken from his recent review of Commendatore Luigi Villari's book, *The Fascist Experiment*, (Faber & Gwyre, London, 1926), in the Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs : "Had there been no European War, no bolshevist Revolution, a movement such as Fascism would sooner or later have taken place in Italy, although it would probably

\*It should be noted here that Marinetti's "Futurist" movement also but in a minor degree, unquestionably contributed to the formation of Fascism. D'Annunzio, too, has exercised a great influence on the practical development of fascism, the programme of which has,

have been less popular and theatrical and certainly less 'repressive,' because it would not have had to combat alien ideas. . . ." The post-war crisis, in fact, brought matters to a head ; liberal statecraft was found bankrupt ; and to save Italy from economic ruin there was nothing for it but for a minority of intrepid souls, acting in advance of, but not against, public opinion, to seize the State and to achieve Fascism by Revolution. By great fortune, the movement also produced the man, gifted with all the true marks of a leader, a man of the people, who could read deep into the soul of the people and thereby be able to drive the movement closer and closer to the Italian Nation's true traditions, ridding it, as it developed, of its impurities and moderating its excesses.

For this reason alone Fascism has come to stay in Italy. For Europe it stands at the cross-roads looking back towards the two Romes, Imperial and Catholic, that made her civilisation, and pointing to its straight continuation as the only safe road by which to advance. Thus its historical function and mission is simply this : to prepare the ground for a new European political and social synthesis, founded on the sure traditions of the past, when Europe was yet one.

*The Historical Function of Fascism.*  
in many respects, been inspired by D'Annunzio's ideas embodied in his constitution for the State of Fiume—ideas very akin to those of Guild Socialism. Cf. Odon Por, *Fascism* (Labour Publishing Co., London, 1923).

## CHAPTER II

## THE STATE

"MAN's natural instinct moves him to live in civil society, for he cannot, if dwelling apart, provide himself with the necessary requirements of life, nor procure the means of developing his mental and moral faculties. Hence it is divinely ordained that he should lead his life—be it family, social or civil—with his fellow-men, amongst whom alone his several wants can be adequately supplied. But as no society can hold together unless some one be over all, directing all to strive earnestly for the common good, every civilised community must have a ruling authority, and this authority, no less than society itself has its source in nature, and has, consequently, God for its author. Hence it follows that all public power must proceed from God—for God alone is the true supreme Lord of the World. Everything, without exception, must be subject to Him, and must serve Him, so that whatsoever holds the right to govern holds it from one sole and single source, namely, God, the Sovereign Ruler of all. *There is no power but from God* (Rom. xiii, 1). The right to rule,

however, is not necessarily bound up with any special mode of Government. It may take this or that form, provided only that it be of a nature to insure the general welfare."\*

This trenchant and succinct paragraph from the pen of Leo XIII. summarises the burden of the following chapter ; and so well is the classic, Catholic, traditionalist idea of the State therein expressed and proved, that it would almost seem superfluous to add anything to it. But for the sake of the profane general reader, it would be well, nevertheless, to beat round the questions involved in order to make quite certain that no point be misunderstood ; and to use the opportunity thereby given to criticise certain opposing theories and to make some few little excursions into regions closely connected, if only indirectly, with the main theory. I shall accordingly divide the remainder of the chapter under a series of headings.

1. Whenever a ruling authority, not humanly subject to any higher ruling authority, exists over a given society of human families, that society constitutes a State, however barbarous, however primitive it may be. Here

*The State  
and its  
Origins.*

\* From Leo XIII.'s Encyclical *Immortale Dei* on the Constitution of States, 20th June, 1888.

Cf. also Aristotle, *Politics*, III, 2, "Man is by nature a political animal," and St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>ae</sup>, q. 109, arts. 3 and 6 ad 1<sup>m</sup>., 3 q. 65, art. 1.

we have an accurate definition of the State in accordance with the broader meaning of the term. It is a society juridically organised, "a political unity, whose *raison d'être* is the promotion of the general good."\*

The State, accordingly, is not simply a national unity, nor a racial unity, nor a religious or moral unity, nor yet an intellectual or emotional unity. A given State may coincide with these unities ; it may, in the course of historical development, arise from one or more of these unities, either alone or combined ; it may, and almost certainly will, tend to establish these unities. But these unities do not in fact constitute the State, because they can exist independently of the State. The essence of the State is political unity—juridical unity ; and it is a "perfect" society in that it admits no superior authority to itself save alone the Moral Law, which is the Law of God. Nevertheless, as I stated in the previous chapter, an indication of political progress is the growth and intergration of national States, that is, the assimilation by a given State of the various national groups or peoples of which it may be composed, into one single Nation under the authority of its juridical institutions, which are an aspect of itself ; and the extension of the State, wherever extension leads to assimilation of the parts to which its authority is

\* Cf. A. Valensin, *Traité de Droit Naturel*, Vol. II, Chap. IV, par. 2 (Edition Spes, Paris, 1925).

extended.\* National unity, therefore, is indeed a measure of political progress. But the State may well be independent of national unity ; and its independence of national unity may be justified, " provided it be of a nature to insure the general welfare," and demonstrates its vitality by its cohesion and by its power of assimilation. The power of assimilation is, in fact, the general justification of Empire, of which more will be said in due course.

" The political unity which is the State, arises from the co-operation of two causes, of which one is the very nature of things, the other the conscious human will—so that one may rightly say of the State that it is, taken as a whole, both a natural and voluntary society."†

The establishment of States is not due to men's caprice. Historically speaking, the establishment of States has not followed upon an era of anarchy. Their establishment is a product of nature, the consequence of man being by nature a social animal, in that no society of families can hold together without a supreme ruling authority, the presence of which makes of that society a State and man a political animal. In other

\* It is important for the reader here to recall to mind the definition of " Nation " given in the last chapter, lest any misconceptions should arise owing to his associating any other meaning with that term.

† Cf. A. Valensin, *Traité de Droit Naturel*, Vol. II, Chap. IV, par. 2 (Edition Spes, Paris, 1925).

words, States have not arisen and do not arise by the mere conscious willing of human beings ; but having arisen or arising, men's will consciously acquiesces in their establishment, in that their establishment fulfils purposes inherent in human nature, and seeks more or less successfully to perfect them. For the whole human race, by the Grace of God, is born members one of another ; and the natural tendency of mankind to form States, to acquiesce consciously in their formation and to perfect them, is a reflection of this fact. It is only due to fallen human nature, in other words to *original sin*, that the whole of humanity has failed to grow up or crystallise into a single State. The universal State, however, is the goal of political progress, an aspiration which, owing to man's very nature, it is impossible to cancel from his heart. But such progress, in so far as it may be promoted by man's conscious will, even if we discount actual selfish ambitions, is hindered by the very diversity of existing States, in size, degree of civilisation and culture ; by distrust of one another ; by the fear of oppression ; above all, by disagreement over what constitutes moral worth ; for no State will willingly allow itself to become merged in another higher authority, if it experiences even the smallest suspicion that thereby a code of Moral Law, other than that which itself holds to be true, would become ascendant, and so corrupt in its eyes the ends

for which the State is constituted.\* It is too often forgotten that many wars are waged in perfect good faith, whether in fact justified or not, owing to the fear of succumbing to a power thought to be morally inferior.

So the State is a political unity, the juridical institutions of which are an aspect of itself. Thus, too, the notion of a State and of authority go together ; for the exercise of a supreme ruling authority is the function of the State. The State, moreover, is an organism (as indeed are all human societies, but more specifically the State as being the most perfect and formal of human societies), albeit an organism *sui generis*, a fact which Sociology demonstrates, in that the State may be observed to be a living unity, subject to growth and decay, like any other living organism. Hence it is not the mere sum of its parts, but the resultant thereof, with an autonomy of its own, having as the object of its existence the general good.

As Herbert Spencer has pointed out : " The State undergoes, like every living organism, a continuous

\* For this reason the establishment of religious unity would, more than anything else, in an age of political progress, promote the establishment of an universal State. But no religious unity is possible without the acceptance of the principle of religious authority—not that religious authority can coerce individual judgment, but because the presence of a religious authority preserves the given deposit of doctrine from becoming lost or corrupted, insures its consistent development and is the only effective check on the process of indefinite disintegration.

growth. As it grows, its parts become unlike ; it exhibits increase of structure. The unlike parts simultaneously assume activities of unlike kinds. These activities are not simply different, but their differences are so related as to make one another possible. The reciprocal aid thus given causes mutual dependence of the parts, and the mutually dependent parts, living by and for one another, form an aggregate constituted on the same general principle as is an individual organism. . . . The analogy of a society (State) to an organism becomes clearer on learning that every organism of appreciable size is a society ; and on further learning that, in both, the lives of the units continue for some time if the life of the aggregate becomes suddenly arrested, while, if the aggregate is not destroyed by violence, its life greatly exceeds the life of its units.\*

The natural tendency of all organisms is to fight for their continued existence ; and Sociology demonstrates that States exhibit this natural tendency as powerfully and instinctively as any other living organism. This is a natural law, which the Moral Law transcends, but does not lay aside. The Moral Law can never be in essential conflict with Natural Law. So here we have a law of life ; and the manner in which the Moral Law transcends it is by sanctioning the sacrifice of individual

\* Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*. Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Regimine Prince., 4. 33.*

life whenever thereby a richer, more vigorous life and a generally higher (more moral) life is rightly judged to be the consequence. Thus the justification of the State's right to promote a spirit of self-sacrifice among its members for the common good, or to call upon its members to risk, or even lay down, their lives in order to insure its survival, depends on the fact of the fulfilment by the State of the purposes for which it is divinely constituted, the promotion of the general well-being, that is, a higher, richer and more vigorous life for the aggregate that succeeds the generation of which the sacrifices are demanded.\* The same principle may be held likewise to justify many coercive laws, provided such laws do not in any way infringe on an individual's "natural" rights, arising out of the conditions in which and the purposes for which the individual, endowed with a soul and a rational mind, has been created.

But Government is an art exercised by human beings, who are apt to fail, even with the best intentions, in their judgment of right and wrong means. Laws may, in fact, be unjust or defeat their own purpose, however well intended. When we leave general principles and enter the realm of the contingent, we are often beset by insurmountable difficulties. Practically we seem often to be placed in the dilemma of a

\* Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theol. 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>o</sup>, q. 31, art. 3 ad 2<sup>um</sup>.*

choice between two evils, so that, as I have said, the path to Heaven of the practical statesman is only too often paved by good intentions. There is, of course, the Science of Casuistry, a specialised branch of Moral Philosophy, to guide practical men along the right path. And if, for no adequate reason, this Science has earned a somewhat evil reputation, this is but the homage which it pays to the difficulties which are to be met with in the realm of the contingent. Much of it necessarily constitutes debatable ground ; but the world owes a debt of infinite gratitude to the great Jesuit thinkers, to whom, more than anyone else, is due the elaboration of this Science. Those who pretend to scoff at it are generally those who have never taken the trouble to enquire into the subject or are so proud as to imagine that their own uninstructed reason, instinct or experience are an invariably infallible guide. I assure these folk that private judgment on moral questions is the death of all morality. If this were not so, there would be good cause to allow criminals to act as judges in their own cases.

2. Authority is essential to any form of society, whether it be domestic or civil, barbarous or civilised, *Authority* legitimate or illegitimate, free or necessary. *in the Abstract.* Authority will invariably be present in some form or society will cease to be.\*

\* Cf. Leibnitz, quoted by A. Valensin, *Traité de Droit Naturel*.

The definition of authority and proof of the above statement are given very forcibly by Albert Valensin, as follows :—

“ Les hommes ne sauraient vivre normalement isolés les uns des autres. Il est dans leur nature de vivre en société, c'est-à-dire en unissant leurs activités en vue d'une fin commune. Mais pour tendre efficacement à cette fin commune, ils ont essentiellement besoin de recevoir l'impulsion d'un principe d'unité qui ne soit pas seulement extérieur, mais intérieur, touchant à leur volonté même et la liant par le seul lien qui convienne à des êtres intelligents, et par conséquent libres : je veux dire, par le lien moral de l'obligation.

“ Or, ce principe, cette faculté, ce pouvoir d'oblier est précisément ce qu'on entend par l'autorité.”\*

So authority consists in the right of Government. It is a moral power, a reasonable, a unifying and beneficent principle, to which respect is due on the one hand, which requires a consciousness of responsibility in those who exercise it on the other.† Most of all is this true respecting the State, the supreme ruling

\* Albert Valensin, *Traité de Droit Naturel*, Vol. II, Chap. IV, par.3. Reason is man's title to freedom ; and if reason binds him to observe the Moral Law, he loses thereby nothing of his freedom. *Whosoever committeth sin*—who denies what is reasonable—is the slave of sin or of Unreason—(John, VIII, 34). So that submission to authority, which Reason demonstrates to be necessary whereby man may live peacefully in society, is no loss of freedom. The question of a given authority losing its right to govern owing to its own neglect of reason's dictates, is dealt with in due course.

† Cf. Ibid.

authority in a civil society. So the State does not originally arise, as some would pretend, as a consequence of the presence of a national instinct. I do not mean by this that, in the course of historical development, a State may not be formed out of elements having a clearly-defined national consciousness, following the dissolution or partial dissolution of another State or States. This, of course, happens frequently, though by no means invariably. More often than not within the State, established originally with complete disregard of national consciousness, a sense of nationality among those composing the State is brought gradually into being, especially if the State shows itself to be a strong and vital organism and fulfils adequately the purposes for which it is constituted.\* The inability on the part of a State to assimilate the national groups or peoples of which it may originally be composed into a single Nation is due, in most cases, to a combination of weakness and bad, unreasonable, unsympathetic Government, leading to disintegration from within by the rebellion of the disaffected or to disintegration from without as a consequence of defeat in war.

\* Compare Switzerland. Modern Italy itself affords another example. Originally only a few imaginative minds had any feeling of common nationality for the whole of Italy. Even at the time of the Risorgimento it was only a minority who felt anything of the kind. It has been the Great War and Fascism which have really created, for the first time, in Italy a powerful sense of common nationality among the people at large.

The theory that the presence of a national instinct gave rise originally to States is flatly contrary to the facts, which anyone with historical knowledge will readily admit. It is putting the cart before the horse. On the other hand, there may be good enough reasons, without having to fall back upon this theory, why, in particular cases, a particular imperial system should be combated, or why the aspirations of a people, strongly united by a common national sentiment, should be encouraged to break away, by every legitimate means, from the dominion of an imperial State and form a State of their own, either alone or in conjunction with another outside group sharing with them the same or similar national consciousness. If the imperial State in question be flagrantly misgoverning its members, or some of them ; if it be exhibiting an obvious incapacity for assimilation ; if its weakness be such that there is constituted a continual menace to its safety or cohesion, the creation of new States by a regrouping of the members of the imperial State along the lines dictated by national sentiment, or in accordance with some other principle of unity, may be legitimately advocated as a measure to insure better Government, more stable political conditions, greater or swifter political progress, or peace. There is nothing, however, inherently wrong, unstable or aggressive in an imperial system. On the contrary, a sound imperial system, like the

Roman, for one, requires no apology. An imperial system is in countless cases the prelude to greater unity, to the creation of a wider national consciousness, to the establishment of peaceful conditions over a wider area, to greater well-being through the lessening of restrictions on trading, and to the maintenance of peace in the world at large. Who can deny that the British Empire is not eminently fulfilling these functions? Again, the splitting up of Central and South Eastern Europe, as a consequence of the Great War, into a large number of national States, though, maybe, a necessary and even salutary process of historical development (given the facts of Turkish misrule and the decadent conditions of the Austro-Hungarian Empire), is by no means an unmixed blessing to the peoples concerned. So we may rightly conclude that, to argue from the particular case, which may be justified, to the general case as a principle to be universally applied, is a complete and dangerous *non sequitur*.

Another false theory in juxtaposition to ours is that States arose in the first instance through some actual or tacit social contract entered into between the individual members of a society. This theory is no less false historically. It was popularised, if not invented, by Rousseau for the purpose of providing some historical and reasonable foundation in support of the contention that Democracy and the "Sovereignty of the People"

were matters of universal validity. In a later chapter I shall have occasion to discuss in some detail these two principles. Here I am only concerned with exposing the falsity of the theory which purports to make these principles necessarily acceptable, because inherent in the origin of States and of authority—though to punish a corpse, in all conscience, is a sad waste of breath; for no serious student of politics entertains the theory of the *Social Contract* any longer for an instant. But in that there are many people (and among these some serious students of politics), who believe passionately in the ideal of Democracy; and since Rousseau's theory had so much to do with the promotion of this ideal during the last century, that it survives still among the uninstructed,\* we may as well recapitulate a few of the main reasons that expose its futility.

A.—The existence of a contract, either actual or tacit, originating the State, especially among primitive peoples, is not confirmed by history. On the contrary, all the historical evidence points the other way.

B.—The notion that man is "born free," by which Rousseau evidently means "independent," is contrary to experience. Man is born a member of a family,

\* Popular journalism is continually guilty of repeating similar errors, witness Mr. H. G. Wells in his *Outline of History* with respect to the theory of natural selection as solely accounting for evolution.

and is subjected in infancy to the authority of his parents. Moreover, if it has become the custom for grown men and women nowadays to emancipate themselves from all parental authority, this was not so in earlier times, especially among primitive peoples, where the authority of the head of the family usually remained in force until death terminated it. It is true that, in a sense, as we have seen, man is "born free" by virtue of his reason, with which he is endowed.\* If this were all that Rousseau meant by his hypothesis of a pact, namely, that in all forms of society man's reason leads him to acquiesce in some form of authority, I should have no objection to make ; but Rousseau must mean more than this, or why elaborate an historically untrue hypothesis in order to justify something which could be stated much more simply without it ? The truth is that he is searching at all costs for some argument that would necessarily bind man to be the slave of the "general will," that is, to an instinctive force rather than to a rational one. Consequently Rousseau's freedom has no rational significance ; he would say in effect : "I am free to do whatever I will, even to the extent of renouncing my freedom, or of selling my own soul." Such freedom, however, is the very negation of freedom. It is licence.

C.—The notion of a "state of nature," where man

\* See Footnote, p. 73.

was happy in his complete independence, existing anterior to the formation of the State, is an entirely arbitrary presupposition. It is not merely contrary to the teachings of the Church, but contrary to the conclusions of ethnography. (N.B.—A "state of innocence" is not the same thing as a "state of nature.") Even Voltaire, who shared some of Rousseau's conclusions, considered this notion of his as a piece of prodigious nonsense, as indeed it is. "Non-social man would be a miserable, naked, helpless biped, exposed to the rapacity of beasts and to the elements."\*

D.—Rousseau declares the necessity of a pact in order to account for the State and in order to legitimise authority. In other words, he commits himself to the following untenable position : Assuming that a given State came into existence following a pact, unless the pact be renewed every twenty years, as Sieyès logically suggested, that State cannot continue *de jure*, but only *de facto*. For why should a pact, even supposing it were once made and brought a State originally into existence, bind indefinitely future generations of men "born free," that is, born essentially independent ? And what of children and women and of all those men who happen to be disenfranchised ? Is any pact valid

\* Cf. Richard Aldington, *Voltaire*, Part II, Chap. XIII (George Routledge, London, 1925).

without their concurrence? On what criterion, moreover, were the original voters enfranchised? Did these include women? What in fact are the limits within which the equality of all men, whereby they become entitled to have a say in making the pact, is to be practically admitted? The possession of Reason? But what, in the absence of some original authority, is to decide at what age and in what circumstances men and women are to be considered sufficiently reasonable to be accorded the suffrage? All along the question is being hopelessly begged or eluded. For even supposing an agreed universal system of suffrage, is any pact valid between enfranchised members unless accepted unanimously? Of course, if all men were endowed with perfect reasonableness, unanimity would result. But then there would be no need for a pact. And in the absence of unanimity, has a minority not thereby an indefeasible right to secede? Rousseau refused to admit this right. Yet the supposed indefeasible right of the majority to rule, which has proved to be the practical consequence of Rousseauism, is in reality a denial of Rousseau's basic thesis! Never, indeed, was a theory so utterly paradoxical, inconsistent, self-contradictory and contrary to established facts and common sense.\* It wallows from one fallacy to another, perhaps because

\* Cf. A. Valensin, *Traité de Droit Naturel*, Part II, Chap. XIV, par. 11.



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Rousseau failed, in the first instance, to make this most important distinction, namely, that the two propositions : (1) that man is a rational animal, and (2) that man must needs act reasonably, do not mean the same thing. The first proposition is true. The second is false. The first supports the theory that good Government should be reasonable, that Reason is the criterion of good Government, that any Government, however formed, is legitimate if reasonable—all three true propositions. The second supports the theory that the popular will must be right, that a Government not based on the popular will must be wrong—both false propositions.

3. So far we have treated the question of authority in the abstract. In the concrete the question poses itself as follows : What man, or body of men, has the right to exercise authority ? *Authority in the Concrete.* In other words, who has the right to perform the functions of the State ?

We have seen that authority arises spontaneously as a condition of society. Historically speaking, the actual sovereign power is found to be wielded in innumerable different ways. In primitive societies it is often wielded under a patriarchal system or by a council of Elders. Or the constitution of a State, whether established in accordance with Law or Custom having the force of Law, may be based on the rule of one or of the few or of the many, according to circumstances.

Have any of these forms of Government more than another the right to exercise authority? The answer given, in accordance with the doctrines so much advertised during the past century, whether Rousseau's theory be subscribed to or not, is that only the many have the right to exercise authority, in the sense that the "general will" is the only legitimate authority.

The most plausible reason given for this answer is that, the general good being the object of Government, the "general will" can alone insure the general good. But nobody has ever been able to give a satisfactory answer to the question why this should necessarily be so. Why should the "general will," assuming that it is possible to determine it, be considered infallible? Is there any reason to suppose that the instinct of the mass is usually superior to the reason of the individual? Or have we to suppose that the mass acts reasonably? Of course, if we assume that mass action is always, or even generally, dictated by reasonable forethought, we might justly conclude that, having no other interest than to promote the general well-being, the authority of the mass has a better title to authority than any other. Unfortunately, however, it is precisely mass-action that is, in fact, the most unreasonable of human actions. In other words, if we trust the "general will," we trust to a blind instinct, which, given that society is an organism, may indeed be one of *Nature's* means of pre-

serving the organism's life: animals are endowed by a very acute instinct of the kind. But men are not merely animals, though man in the mass acts very like an animal. Is the State then to be guided in the last resort by instinct, when Reason is available—Reason, which, to say the least, is unquestionably a fitter instrument for preserving life?

Again, how is the "general will" to be determined? The State is not an organism endowed with a natural means of articulation. Some kind of artificial machinery has got to be established by which the "general will" may be made manifest. But if we appeal to each individual singly and make a sum of the results, we do not obtain a general verdict; we obtain a sum of individual verdicts, which is not the same thing. Any mathematician will confirm this, though it may not be self-evident to the layman at a glance.\* Of course, if we obtained, as the result of such an appeal, an unanimous verdict, and assumed, at the same time, that all members of the State, unwilling to exercise or incapable of exercising the suffrage (including minors, criminals, lunatics and domestic animals) tacitly supported the unanimous verdict of those who exercised the right to vote, the result might perhaps be regarded as an approximate equivalent to the "general will." But

\* Cf. W. Sanderson, *Statecraft* (Methuen, London, 1927): "To grant the franchise to ordinary citizens as individuals is to invite political decisions based on myriads of eccentric opinions, no two of which can be exactly alike and none correct."

even so, it would only be approximate, unless we further presupposed that each member, in registering his vote, solemnly and truly voted for what he considered the interests of the community at large, in the full realisation that the life of the community goes beyond that of a single generation, rather than in favour of his own personal interests or of those of his immediate generation. But such a presupposition is a fantasy ; and how can we ever obtain unanimity in practice ? Even in exceptional cases of crisis, engendering great excitement, with a single issue at stake, and when the decision to be taken is one practically decided in advance by the circumstances, would there be any hope of obtaining unanimity even in a small community ? As for majority rule, it is still further removed from one determined by the " general will " ; for, unless the majority be so large as to approach unanimity, a condition of affairs only less difficult to obtain than unanimity itself, the divergence between what is implied by the sum of individual wills and what is implied by the " general will " becomes all the more marked. In fact, therefore, there is no sure means of determining the " general will," save, possibly, in tiny States where the whole of its members are able to assemble together in one place and there act *en masse*, after being duly excited in order to allow a full measure of electricity to circulate. Perhaps the surest way of gauging the

" general will " would be by employing a medium.\* But I have not heard yet of any serious suggestion to employ a medium as a method of Government ; although the greatest statesmen are usually endowed with a medium-like sense, by which, within limits, they are enabled, so to speak, to sound the " general will." For by all means let the " general will " be sounded in so far as this be possible. But there is no reason whatever for necessarily allowing the actions of Government to be dictated by it.

The truth is that any such notion respecting the inherent right of the people as a whole to govern is manifestly absurd.† This does not mean, however, that I deny all merit to the " general will," especially when it is understood as that *esprit de corps*, issuing in patriotic sentiment.‡ On the contrary, this may be

\* The ancient device of consulting oracles may, perhaps, be cited as an attempt to consult the " general will " by means of a medium.

† As Mussolini himself has put it, the " Sovereignty of the People " is a myth, nothing more nor less than an ideological abstraction.

‡ It may be argued with a good deal of reason that the force of *public opinion*, on the other hand, is something very different to the instinctive mass reaction to certain circumstances which I have identified with the " general will " ; that, on the contrary, public opinion is a rational force, against which no Government should act. It should be noted, however, that apart from the practical difficulty of gauging public opinion and especially the degree of its unanimity ; apart from the fact that a strong expression of public opinion, whether right or wrong, necessarily sets limits to the powers of any Government ; its value is very relative, because its value depends entirely on the kind and degree of public education. So it is not so much a question of the right of public opinion to control Government, as it is a question of the duty of Government to create a really healthy public opinion.

a great force for good, and its latent presence is a sign of political maturity. Neither does what I have said mean that a popular form of Government may not be highly desirable. This is quite another question, which will be dealt with in its proper place. Here I am solely concerned with the concrete question as to what it is that sanctions the *right* to govern.

The right answer is a very simple one : The Moral Law, which is based on Reason. Different forms of Government arise according to circumstances. Government may take one form or another, as we have seen, whether popular or otherwise. But, whatever its form may be, there is only one thing that will give the right to govern : the Moral Law, Reason. If those who hold the reins of power have acquired their power in accordance with a just principle and govern in accordance with Reason, implying a due regard to the general welfare, which, above all, presupposes the moral welfare of the people, no one has the right to call in question the right of that Government to govern. This is the Divine Right of any Government, whether of Kings or of Parliaments—Divine because to act reasonably and in accordance with the Moral Law is to fulfil the will of God. It is an appalling thought if examined closely, this idea of enthroning the “ general will ” as sovereign, a ferocious beast in the place that Reason should occupy. We know what a terrible thing a mob,

unrestrained by authority, can be—blind, excessive, cruel. We know how dangerous and how contagious is war-fever, when peace is hanging in the balance. However such a theory, in fact, as that which ascribes the only true title to authority to the “ general will,” ever came to be accepted by reasonable men, it is difficult to imagine. The truth is, as Whitehead—in the author’s humble opinion perhaps the greatest living philosopher and to-day by far the most eminent among non-Catholic philosophers—has pointed out in his *Science and the Modern World*,\* ours is not an Age of Reason, still less the eighteenth century, despite its “ rationalism,” but an Age of Science ; and that Science, vulgarly held to be the inseparable handmaiden of Reason, has made its greatest advances in an age characterised by its lack of interest in dialectics. “ The Ages of Faith,” as he says, “ were the Ages of Reason.” A truly reasonable age would surely have found sharper weapons from the armoury of the old Philosophy than the above shoddy implements wherewith to depose the Kings and oligarchies, who, in recent centuries were abusing the authority they held by governing flagrantly in the interests of a class rather than that of the whole people. It has been left to Fascism to revive the use of the old weapons and, in driving by their means from

\* A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, (Cambridge University Press, 1925).

high place Ineptitude and Folly, to prove their eternal efficacy.

4. Of course, sweet reasonableness, as we have had occasion to point out, is not always in practice to the

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Authority.* fore. This fact alone is sufficient to con-  
demn the principle that a majority possesses

necessarily the right to rule, or, to take the opposite extreme, that an absolute Kingship is the only proper form of Government. No particular form of Government is, so to speak, presanctified. To govern in the interests of the general welfare is not, in fact, an easy matter. Government is an art, the exercise of which depends first and foremost on right principles and right intention, whatever the form of Government may be. Practical questions therefore arise as to how we are to secure rulers who will act constantly in accordance with right principles, with right intention ; or as to how we are to secure, given right intention, the maximum of reasonableness in practice. And at what point has anyone the right to refuse allegiance to a constituted authority which appears to be erring in one or both of the above senses ?

The answers which I propose to give to these questions are as follows : First, being practical questions, certain practical tests, certain practical ways and means, can propose the solutions to the difficulties they adumbrate. No Government, for instance, can in

practice remain indefinitely in power if it continually and flagrantly misgovern society. The instinctive " general will " comes in such cases, if the sense of self-preservation of the Government fails to bring about reform, or if common sense fails to accommodate matters, to be provoked into action at the instigation of, or in support of, a minority ready to suffer martyrdom in the name of what they hold to be reasonable. Reason and instinct in such cases, in fact, tend to combine and the Vox Populi to become the Vox Dei—and we have Revolution in or Dissolution of the State. Again, practical rules can be formed and should be formed, based upon experience and upon Reason, as to the proper constitution of Governments, in order to allow of their improvement, to allow of their progressive adaptation to changing conditions, and so as to admit of reasonable criticism and provide means by which incompetence and abuse of power may be minimised, that is, incompetent or tyrannous members of Government substituted in accordance with some constitutional device to meet the case in point. On the other hand, we have the test of Moral Law, which alone sets limits to the authority of the State and should be the main safeguard against the abuse of power, in that any flagrant and continuous violation of the Moral Law by the State sets individuals free to disobey the constituted authority.

Now I am aware that it may be objected to this last point that, where no independent moral authority is admitted, man has either to rely on his individual moral judgment, with nothing more than the choice of some Moral Philosophy and the Science of Casuistry to help him, or he must submit blindly to the authority of the State. I admit the dilemma ; and when it arises, we are indeed theoretically reduced to allowing the criminal, so to speak, either way to act as judge in his own case. The absence of an independent moral authority affords excuses for both tyranny and irresponsible rebellion. But there is no theoretical alternative to these evils that I can see, when no independent moral authority is admitted. The practical tests are then the only tests. But where an independent moral authority is admitted, the full solution is available. Then we have the State on the one hand, supreme in temporal matters, the Church on the other, supreme in spiritual matters, the court of appeal of the oppressed, the moderator of tyrants. Thus, I maintain, the ideal of the Middle Ages, then never more than most imperfectly realised, of an Universal State conterminous with an Universal Church remains *à l'ordre du jour*, the ideal to which any true theory of the State must inevitably pay homage and command us to aspire.

This reflection leads us to deal with another important, though none the less fallacious theory, of the State,

in juxtaposition to ours and conveniently dealt with under the heading of the present section. I refer to that "Gothic" theory of the State,\* repellent to the Latin mind, but which has not been without its influence in Latin countries, elaborated by Hegel, Schelling and Fichte, who would make "reasons of State" the sole moral sanction. Needless to say, such a theory would subordinate the individual entirely to the State and justify any form of tyranny resulting in the successful survival of a State and in its aggrandisement.

The theory entails that perverted form of "Nationalism" to which we alluded in the last chapter, and is a particular form of that political "Naturalism" to which we alluded in the introduction. It is based on a Metaphysic, which substitutes for a transcendent God, an

\* "A Gothic theory of the State repellent to the Latin mind." This is how my friend, His Excellency Dr. Emilio Brodrero, Under-Secretary of State for Public Instruction, in a letter addressed to me in February 1927, commented on "Naturalism" and that false form of Nationalism which is the form of Naturalism advocated by the *Action Française*. Daudet and Maurras, with all their French Patriotism, appear indeed to have become in this respect the adepts of the German professors who contributed so largely to creating German Militarism. This is, of course, the logical consequence of their alliance with and tolerance of Atheism, combined with their just horror of the individualist doctrines that are carrying their country to ruin. In other words, if you posit the need of authority, but are prepared to rule out God, you have no theoretical alternative but to enthronize the State in God's place. It is in the acknowledgment of God as the Supreme Sovereign, and all Governments, however constituted, as merely the temporal vicars of Christ, where Fascism parts company with the doctrines advocated by the *Action Française*.

immanent God, a God who manifests himself as an eternal "becoming;" a Metaphysic that endorses a kind of Pantheism and concludes that because God and Nature are in some way confounded, whatever is must be right. It further raises the idea of power to the place occupied by the idea of love in Christian Metaphysics. The "will to power" becomes the proper law of action. It would make a state of war the natural and inevitable condition of man, that is, it would sanctify that condition. Hegel actually does attempt to do so. It may, in fact, be said to be the very theory that led Lucifer to let loose war in Heaven.\*

Hegel's represents, indeed, the quintessence of all the doctrines which, in the course of the last centuries, propagated in one form or another the idea of the State being an end in itself, and identified, as did the Pagans, the moral with the civil law. His Philosophy is the ripe fruit of the Pagan Renaissance. It is the eldest child of eighteenth-century cynicism and the father of German Militarism, while it affords a bait for all that is criminal in us, in that it consists of a hash of Materialism (positivist, utilitarian, and evolutionist), dished up under the guise of a false Idealism that appeals to man's only too easily aroused predatory instincts, pride and the lust for power.

There are various forms of this pernicious Philosophy

\* Cf. Hegel, *Rechtsphilosophie*, par. 321.

and it is impossible to follow these various forms into detail. The Italian so-called neo-Hegelians, Spaventa, Benedetto Croce and Giovanni Gentile, have each in turn contributed much to attenuate the German theses, to purge them of their gross materialism. They have also valiantly served the urgent historical purpose of working the German theses out into a bare thread; although, as a result, I must confess from my own point of view, which may indeed be due to my own limitations, they leave behind such a tangled skein that it is somewhat difficult to make head or tail of their conclusions.

German Idealism unfortunately arrived to endorse "Historical Fatalism," which is Italy's most conspicuous contribution to the philosophical heresies that have dominated European thought since the Renaissance, a contribution of which Vico, with all his grand gifts to the world, cannot be wholly acquitted.

Vico is generally considered the founder of the "Philosophy of History." But although there may be a true History of Philosophy, there can be, strictly speaking, no true Philosophy of History. History is, when all is said and done, merely an accurate description of past events. A good historian is one who, besides accurately describing the events, possesses sound judgment in the choice for the purposes he has in view of the relative importance of events he describes and of their inter-relationship. From History, it is true,

certain social laws may be deduced, that is, certain uniformities in the scientific sense. But such laws belong to the conclusions of Sociology, a Science not a Philosophy, a Science moreover based only partly on historical data.

The endowment of an historical sense is the marked characteristic of the Italian mind ; and in the riot which attempted to overthrow Orthodoxy from the sixteenth century onwards, it was natural that Italy should make a personal contribution to the specious half-truths which only too commonly passed muster for Philosophy during the following generations in the form of philosophico-historical theses. And now, in getting back to Orthodoxy "Historical Fatalism," (as one would have a right to expect, given the Italian hallmark), which teaches in effect that history is but an unfolding, inevitable pageant, containing no might-have-beens, so that all social and political systems (and Philosophies) have their full justification, whatever their intrinsic merit, in accordance with their mere power of survival, looms as a particularly nasty obstacle in her path. The school of Gentile is, however, gradually sifting the truth from the falsehood embodied in this obstacle ; and when this is done, the obstacle will doubtless crumble.

For my part, I believe that dynamite—a general assault on Hegelian logic—would, as a matter of fact,

do the work quicker and, in the long run, probably better too. I have a notion that Hegel and his bedfellows have sucked out of the Italian heresy most of the falsehood, so that a frontal attack on Hegel would do more good in Italy than anything else. This, however, is beyond the scope of this book to undertake ; and as Hegel's theory of the State and all kindred heresies can only be fully exposed by criticising his general Philosophy, I am afraid I must refer the reader elsewhere for a refutation.\* Let him be quite certain, nevertheless, that the notion of the State as an end in itself forms no part whatever of orthodox Fascism."†

\* Cf. Benedetto Croce's *Saggio sullo Hegel* (Laterza, Bari), which, if it does not go as far as I would wish, remains a most admirable criticism.

† All the so-called "Idealist" philosophies seem to me to exhibit one fatal flaw, by which the commonest pitfall into which logicians are apt to fall is erected into a logical principle, as G. E. Moore, of Cambridge, has shown in the most brilliant of his essays, "The Refutation of Idealism" (*Philosophical Studies*, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., London, 1922). The following is, perhaps, the most arresting paragraph of this essay, well worth quoting if it will lead the reader to study the question which I have here raised but cannot conclude :

"A distinction is asserted, but it is *also* asserted that the things distinguished form an 'organic unity.' But, forming such a unity, it is held, each would not be what it is *apart from its relation to the other*. Hence to consider either by itself is to make an *illegitimate abstraction*. The recognition that these are 'organic unities' and 'illegitimate abstractions' in this sense is regarded as one of the chief conquests of modern philosophy. But what is the sense attached to these terms ? An abstraction is illegitimate when, and only when, we attempt to assert of a *part*—of something abstracted—that which is true of the whole to which it belongs ; and it may, perhaps, be useful to point out that this should not be done. But the application actually

made of this principle and what perhaps would be expressly acknowledged as its meaning, is something much the reverse of useful. The principle is used to assert that certain abstractions are *in all cases* illegitimate ; that, whenever you try to assert *anything whatever* of that which is part of an organic whole, what you assert can only be true of the whole. And this principle, so far from being a useful truth, is necessarily false. For if the whole can, nay *must*, be substituted for the part in all propositions and for all purposes, this can only be because the whole is absolutely identical with the part. When, therefore, we are told that green and the sensation of green are certainly distinct but yet are not separable, or that it is an illegitimate abstraction to consider the one apart from the other, what these provisos are used to assert is that, though the two things are distinct, yet you not only can, but must treat them as if they were not. Many philosophers, therefore, when they admit a distinction, yet (following the lead of Hegel) boldly assert their right, in a slightly more obscure form of words, also to deny it. The principle of organic unities, like that of combined analysis and synthesis, is mainly used to defend the practice of holding *both* of two contradictory propositions, wherever this may seem convenient. In this, as in other matters, Hegel's main service to philosophy has consisted in giving a name to and erecting into a principle, a type of fallacy to which experience had shown philosophers, along with the rest of mankind, to be addicted. No wonder that he has followers and admirers."

## CHAPTER III

### THE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF FASCISM

THE general theory of the State enunciated in the last chapter may be truthfully said to be the one endorsed by Fascism, by Mussolini. The present chapter accordingly will, at the risk of some repetition, present a summary of the salient principles that form part and parcel of this theory, together with a number of others, dependent thereon, on which Fascism lays particular stress.

I. Man is by nature a social animal. Living in society is the natural condition of mankind. Society cannot hold together, however, without there being some authority ruling it. Authority is implicit in every society. Authority therefore belongs to the natural order of things as much as society itself, and, having thus its source in nature, it has God for its author. So the principle of authority is a divine principle. Wherever a supreme authority exists, acknowledging no higher authority save the sovereignty of God alone, we call that authority the State, which is society juridically

*Summary  
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organised for the purpose of promoting the general good. The State is thus a political unity, and every political unity is an organism, with a life which transcends that of the individuals which compose it, and outlasts that of any particular generation of men. For this reason, the family is the true unit of the State, not single individuals. The State, owing to its acknowledging no higher authority, save God alone, is the highest form of human authority ; and since, as we have shown, it belongs, like all authority, to the natural order of things, man may be justly said to be, by nature, not only a social animal but also a political animal.

II. The highest form of State is the national State, because the most perfect harmony is brought about

*The National State.* when national unity, based on a community of traditions, coincides with political unity.

National unity, moreover, reinforces authority and is an element of vitality in the State. But in the order of evolution (though not necessarily in the order of involution) political unity precedes national unity ; that is, political unity creates national unity, at least whenever the State's authority is exercised over a relatively long period of time, firmly and justly for the general good. Thus, also, vital imperial States tend towards losing their imperial character in a process of assimilation and so towards becoming large national States. The political ideal or goal of mankind is,

indeed, one universal national State, owning one supreme authority and integrated by one common national consciousness, however varied and intense might be the local differences and loyalties.

Fascism insists that progress towards this goal can only be made by upholding the principle of authority in existing States, and not, as would humanitarian Internationalists, by weakening authority and national sentiment, which sustains authority. It seems to stand to reason that man cannot hope to construct a higher authority by a process of destruction that brings the very principle of authority into contempt. It is surely only through the physically binding force of Law and the morally binding force of Religion, that mankind can be brought together into wider unities—and since both of these forces derive their power only from the sanctions provided by authority, progress can only come through sustaining authority, wherever it may be found. Fascism also lays stress on the consciousness of nationality being one of the main bases, in the concrete case of a national State, of any imperative claim on the part of the individual to take a share in Government. The national State, in short, is St. Thomas's *Communitas Perfecta*, that is, that truly unified political society grown conscious of itself and of its ends, the object of the common good, which is the supreme end of any community juridically organised.

III. Authority, arising spontaneously as a necessary condition of society, arises in various forms, according to circumstances. Original State authority appears to have been patriarchal in character.\* *The Principle of Authority.* However this may be, respect is invariably due to the State authority, whatever form it may take, provided it is, with due allowances for human fallibility, acting with right intention and in accordance with right principles. The form that the State authority may take, evolves, or should evolve, in accordance with the requirements of evolving society, adapting itself *motu proprio* to changing conditions. If it fails to do this, it will fatally come, sooner or later, to fail in its object, the promotion of the general good, and it will therefore lose the right to govern, lose the right to be owed respect and become the cause of social dissolution through rebellion or war. Such evolution of the State authority from within adapting itself to outward conditions is a manifestation of organic growth. Where it is not manifest, the State organism must be reckoned decadent or ill.

Tapperelli somewhere sums up very neatly the questions arising out of this conception of authority. He says that authority resides in the community,

\* Some experts, notably in Germany, are now denying this! Whether this view be true or false, however, the argument here is not affected.

because where there is no community there is no authority; that authority is exercised *for the sake of* the community, because this is the very principle of its unity; but that authority *is not derived from* the community, because the community is incapable of either creating it or abolishing it, since it is inseparable from the very notion of community. The precise form which authority takes, however, is a question, as I have said, of organic growth, authority being a vital principle of all society. To the question, *who is to decide the form of Government*, the answer is, *whoever is, in fact, the efficient authority at any given phase of social development*. Wherever a nominal authority has practically abdicated, a real authority must necessarily arise spontaneously to take its place, or society falls into dissolution. This, in effect, was the process which gave rise to the fascist Government.

Once this idea is grasped, it will be seen how futile was Austin's attempt to solve the question juridically of where sovereignty ultimately resides. As Ramiro de Maeztu, in his stimulating book on Guild Socialism (*Authority, Liberty and Function*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1916), clearly shows, the question of sovereignty is a question of power. The body wielding it is continually shifting and it is for the historian and not the jurist to designate the body that happens to be wielding the sovereign power at any particular moment.

In this connection de Maeztu quotes Duguit, Professor of Constitutional Law in the University of Bordeaux : " Law is a discipline of fact which social interdependence imposes on every member of the group." The social rule, in other words, can be shown objectively to be based on solidarity, and solidarity on the fact of man's interdependence.\*

IV. Private moral judgment, if it is not founded on true doctrine, on a true Moral Philosophy, means moral chaos. In the absence,

*The Moral Authority.* therefore, of an admitted independent moral authority, such as is the Church, the practical tests are the only tests, by which to judge the extent to which the State authority is performing its duty. In any case, the State has no right to arrogate to itself the right to judge itself ; nor has the individual the right to lay down capricious standards. Both the all-sufficing and the agnostic State, therefore, reflect a false principle. So the State, to say the least, must conform to a Moral Philosophy and be judged according to that Moral Philosophy. Hence it is important that the Moral Philosophy, acknowledged, protected and vulgarised by the State, should be a true Moral Philo-

\* It is as well to point out here, on the other hand, that many of Duguit's views on the subject of State authority—views which de Maeztu also very largely endorses, are very different, not to say utterly opposed, to Fascism.

sophy ; but any Moral Philosophy is probably better than no Moral Philosophy, provided it be an independent Moral Philosophy, that is, one of universal application and not identified with the notion of State infallibility.

Thus the Scylla and Charybdis of State Agnosticism and State Infallibility must in any case be equally avoided. In practice, this means the recognition by the State Constitution of a Religion of the State. The recognition of the principles of some Moral Philosophy only may work to a certain extent in practice, especially if it reflects the general moral consciousness of the age. But such a makeshift is vague and consequently highly unsatisfactory. By the recognition of a definite Religion the case is otherwise, provided the Religion in question be under the direction of a body independent of the State.

Fascism has formally recognised the Catholic Religion as the Religion of the State in Italy, and has thereby chosen well, not only because it is the Religion of the vast majority of Italians ; not only because the Catholic tradition is part of the very soul of Italy and, given the historical antecedents of Fascism, leaves Fascism really no alternative choice ; but because the Catholic Religion is perhaps the only Religion that preserves *in every sense* its complete independence of State authority. I recommend this point par-

ticularly to the consideration of thoughtful persons.\*

The relations between Church and State have not yet, however, been settled in Italy. The "Roman Question" still subsists. I believe, however, the day of its solution is approaching. It is a very difficult, mainly juridical, question, which cannot be discussed here. It would be quite beyond the scope and purpose of this book to do so. But until it is settled, situations may arise which would prevent the Italian Government and the Holy See from agreeing on all points touching matters of policy. Until it is settled, Fascism will not come entirely into its own. Meantime, however, the Catholic Religion will remain in honour in Italy as the State Religion, no longer a dead letter of the Constitution, as it was under previous Governments. The Crucifix is back in the Schools and in the Law Courts. Religious education is again ensured for all Italian children, unless their parents specifically raise objections. Chaplains are back in the Army and Navy and form part of the fascist Boy Scout Organisation, known as the "Balilla."† The independence of the Church

\* It is precisely this independence which those States who desire to be judges in their own case are so afraid of. The cry which, from time to time, is raised against the political interference of Rome is almost invariably the cry of a guilty man who is anxious either to save himself from condemnation or to perpetrate some crime.

† The disbanding of the Catholic Boy Scout organisations in the smaller towns would have been, according to our theory, intolerable, if emphatic and ample provision had not been made in the law govern-

and its Bishops is recognised. Lastly, public propaganda by other religious sects is forbidden, though, of course, full toleration is granted to the practice of other Religions that are not definitely repugnant to Christian feelings and morals.

V. There is a natural instinctive force possessed by every living organism and directed to maintain that organism's existence. With respect to that organism which is the State, this instinctive force finds expression in the "general will," which is consequently a useful touchstone for every Government to sound, however this may be possible; for the first duty of Government within the Moral Law is to preserve society from dissolution, since society is a necessary condition wherein man may attain his highest development and satisfy his needs. But there is no sure means of ascertaining the "general will," and in any case, unless Reason supports the direction apparently pointed out by the "general will," no cause is shown why that direction should be followed. Reason and not instinct must be the final

*The  
General  
Will.*

ing the "Balilla" organisation, for the religious instruction for the boys. In this connection it should be noted, too, that one of the main reasons for the disbanding of the Catholic Boy Scout organisations in the smaller towns was precisely in order to insure that the local "Balilla" organisations should not be deprived of the Catholic element and so risk falling into the hands of local anti-clericals or those elements in Fascism who would idolise the State and so bring the "Balilla" under the ban of the Church.

criterion of Government action, as well as of individual action. In this connection, it may be useful also to point out that good Government insures Government with the consent of the governed ; for any protracted or widespread discontent is a symptom of bad Government, unless such discontent arises out of an agitation organised by vested interests pursuing selfish ends, that is, particular ends not coincident with the general good.

VI. There are a number of secondary absolute principles to which every form of Government must

*Some Secondary Absolute Principles.* conform, if it is to be able to carry out efficiently the purpose for which it is constituted. For example, we may say that every good form of Government should be devised so that the central authority may be kept by some means in close contact with all parts of the body politic, like a good nervous system, in order that suffering in any part may be swiftly known at headquarters and measures taken by which the malady may be accurately diagnosed and remedied. Justice should be even. The executive should be vigorous, the bureaucracy expeditious and efficient. The system by which are recruited those who actually exercise the powers of State should be such as to throw up in effect an Aristocracy of intelligence and morality. No system should be too rigid, no system too fluid. Means by which construc-

tive and effective criticism may be brought to bear on the acts and proposed acts of Government, and the Government influenced by such criticism should be provided. Likewise means should be provided to act as checks against the possibility of power being utilised to defeat the real purpose of Government, which is the general good as opposed to any particular good, and to enable incompetent members of Government to be easily substituted by others. Means, too, should be provided to enable a form of Government to adapt itself easily to changing conditions. On the other hand, no Government can carry on the business of the State properly, if it has to take truck of purely captious criticism, or if it is at the mercy of gusts of popular sentiment, or depends for its continuance in power on its popularity only.

The list of such secondary absolute principles to which every form of Government should properly subscribe could be prolonged indefinitely ; but no useful purpose would be served here by formulating a greater number. The above will illustrate for the reader the kind of principle intended. Those enumerated are perhaps the more important ones. They are of a kind which almost any school of political thought, whether fascist, liberal or socialist, would regard as practically non-controversial.

VII. The business of the State is to govern. A

weak State is a decadent State. The business of the State is, further, to see to it, that the activities of individuals or individual social groups, within the State, are co-ordinated to promote, in so far as this may be possible, the general good. The end of the State being the general good, the particular province of State action, with its eye on the fact that the life of the State outlasts the life of the individuals that compose it, lies in measures having as their object the harmonising of individual ends with the general needs of society. The duty of the individual is to realise that he is not an isolated unit, that he is a member by nature and necessity of a community, that all men are members of one another, that he is consequently responsible in all his actions to his fellow men, and not only to those of his own generation but to future generations. In fine, it is his duty to contrive to make coincide his individual interests with the general interest. And it is the business of the State to help him to accomplish this by so arranging the structure of society as to make the pursuit of individual interests as often as possible coincident with the general interest, and to prevent by Law, carrying the necessary sanctions, all such activities of individuals which contrast in their effects with the general good, and so, contemporaneously, protect those individuals who are socially inclined from those who are not.

*The State  
and the  
Individual.*

Individuals possess certain natural rights, of which I will speak in due course. But these natural rights of the individual do not conflict with his duties to the community. On the contrary, these natural rights lie at the very roots of society, so, if the State were to infringe on these natural rights, it would be defeating its own purpose. But apart from these natural rights, the State can be no respecter of persons ; so that the State, by the very nature of the case, and with its eye on the general welfare, is concerned only indirectly with the individual's welfare—that is, it requires the individual's welfare to be made one with the general welfare and promotes the individual's welfare through the general welfare, for which alone it is directly responsible. Hence the individual is subordinate to the State, in the sense that he is subject to the authority of the State and restricted in his liberties within the institutions and laws of the State, aiming at the general good. He is not subordinate to the State, on the other hand, in the sense that the State has no limits to its authority over him and makes of itself an end of itself. The promotion of individual happiness may perhaps be regarded indirectly as an end of the State ; but true individual happiness is dependent on the general well-being which it is the direct business of the State to promote, and no individual has the right to seek his happiness in a direction contrasting with the general good.

This distinction is fundamental, and at the risk of labouring the point unduly, we may put it again in the following way : Whereas it would be strictly incorrect to say that the laws and institutions of the State, in fine, the State *uses* the individual for its own purposes and subordinates him to the social organism, this would be true if interpreted only as meaning that all laws and institutions are directed to promote individual action along lines coincident with the general interests of society and so require that the individual submit to the authority of the State, except the State betray its trust. Hence, from a purely juridical point of view, which is eminently the State's point of view, we may justly say that the individual is a subordinate factor, not because he is a less considerable factor than the community, but because he lives by the community, and the protection of the community from dissolution is the first practical duty of the State ; for without authority, without laws or customs having the force of laws, society ceases to be.\*

It is not this conception of solidarity and moral responsibility that is likely to issue in Tyranny. On the contrary, it is precisely Individualism and

\* As St. Thomas Aquinas points out : "The part indeed desires (and should desire) the good of the whole in so far as it is fitting to itself (*i.e.*, to the part) ; but not so that the part refers the good of the whole to itself, but rather so that it refers itself to the good of the whole." (*Summa Theol. 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>ae</sup>, q. 26, art. 3 ad 2<sup>um</sup>*). Or to paraphrase, on the other hand, Gentile :—The conceptions of the individual and of the society to which he belongs are complimentary ideas, which form a real, concrete unity, inseparable except in abstraction. The rights and duties of the one are the function of the other's, and *vice versa*.

Agnosticism that has always been (as History amply proves) and always will be the enemy of true freedom.

This becomes immediately apparent if we examine for a moment the practical ideal—unmasked—of what generally goes by the name of Liberalism, which accepts the individualistic and agnostic hypothesis, yet seeks to found thereon a city of happy families. The liberal solution may, in effect, be stated thus :—The individual is the centre of the universe (*cogito, ergo sum*). The supreme object of the individual's life is his "self-realisation" according to his peculiar nature (a condition on which his happiness—so it is assumed—necessarily depends) ; and he alone (it is said to be his natural right) can and should be judge of what his self-realisation consists in. But since, in a state of anarchy, this would result in the efficient self-realisation of only a few (the stronger, the more intelligent and the more unscrupulous) at the expense of the many relatively less well-equipped individuals, the State is posited as the necessary means by which the latter may be assured a relatively better chance of achieving their individual happiness at the expense of a part of the opportunities for achieving a maximum happiness of the few better equipped individuals. This being so, the object of Government (whatever its form may be) should be properly limited to securing by compromise, as far as this may be practicable, the maximum opportunity for

individual self-realisation *all round*, or, in other words, the highest realisable mean of opportunity for the self-realisation of each individual (the formula "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" was an effort to express this ideal).

Thus the ideal of the perfect liberal State becomes merely a kind of opportunistic combine of the feeble and mediocre, of the many who live in fear of exploitation by the few of energy and ambition !

No wonder under this dispensation, rather than acquiesce in such drab mediocrity, so many of the gifted few have hailed Nietzsche as their prophet. No wonder, as different classes in the community gain self-consciousness, class warfare becomes a fact, since each one knows, whether individual or group, that whoever gains control of the State is in a position to increase his opportunities of self-realisation at the expense of his less fortunate neighbour ! Nay, he would also be justified in doing so where no universal moral law is admitted and all is a matter of individual judgment !

Liberalism indeed may be accounted for, in a world permeated by Individualism and Agnosticism, as a desperate and vain attempt to escape from Tyranny, which is the logical consequence of such a world. For the Tyranny of the *Ancien Régime* was the direct result of the Individualism and Agnosticism of the

Renaissance, operating in a society politically undeveloped and so easily exploited by the bold and unscrupulous. Liberalism, under more evolved political conditions, managed to overthrow this Tyranny, only to prepare the way, however, so it seems, for the alternative dictatorship of a class (Bolshevism), unless it can succeed in stereotyping its colourless ideal in the shape of the socialist slave State, whereby all men may be turned into machines. In fine, as its best, Liberalism can propose but an unstable equilibrium. It is a gloomy edifice built upon the shifting sands.

VIII. The acceptance of fascist principles means the end of *Laissez-Faire* as an absolute principle—that is, the principle of *Laissez-Faire* ceases to be a dogma into which it had come to be erected in the course of the nineteenth century. Its application becomes merely a matter of expediency, dependent on judgment as to whether or not, in given circumstances, its application in particular cases would more or less contribute to the promotion of the general good. Its general application is by now authoritatively condemned, as indeed experience has condemned it. In this Fascism entirely agrees with Mr. Maynard Keynes, despite the latter's prominent position as a Liberal. In fact, Mr. Keynes' excellent little book, *The End of Laissez-Faire* (Hogarth Press, London, 1926), might, so far as it goes, serve as a useful intro-

*The End  
of Laissez-  
Faire.*

duction to fascist economics. There is scarcely anything to object to in it and there is much to applaud. He traces the history of *Laissez-Faire* in a manner that makes every sentence a delight to read and finally takes leave of the principle in a bed of ashes. He acquits the classical economists, Ricardo and Adam Smith, in spite of their language lending itself to the *Laissez-Faire* interpretation, of actually entertaining the fallacy themselves, and shows that it was "the political campaign for Free Trade, the influence of the so-called Manchester School and of the Benthamite Utilitarians, the utterances of secondary economic authorities, and the educational stories of Miss Martineau and Mrs. Marct that fixed *Laissez-Faire* in the popular mind (of England—and through England the whole world was influenced) as the practical conclusion of orthodox political economy," and thereby deformed the thought of the great men who had laid the foundations of the Science. He further traces "the peculiar unity of the everyday political philosophy of the nineteenth century to the success with which it harmonised diversified and warring schools and united all good things to a single end. Hume and Paley, Burke and Rousseau, Godwin and Malthus, Cobbett and Huskisson, Bentham and Coleridge, Darwin and the Bishop of Oxford, were all, it was discovered, preaching practically the same thing—Individualism and *Laissez-Faire*.

This was the Church of England and those her apostles, whilst the company of the Economists were there to prove that the least deviation into impiety involved financial ruin." He then shows conclusively (and therein he is supported by every modern economist of weight) that "the world is not so governed from above that private and social interest always coincide. . . . It is not a correct deduction from the Principles of Economics that enlightened self-interest always operates in the public interest. . . . We cannot, therefore, settle on abstract grounds, but must handle on its merits in detail what Burke termed *one of the finest problems in legislation, namely, to determine what the State ought to take upon itself to direct by the public wisdom, and what it ought to leave, with as little interference as possible, to individual exertion.*" Finally, he concludes very convincingly that Socialism and Individualism are reactions to the same intellectual atmosphere.

All this is pure fascist premises and I cordially recommend Mr. Keynes to proceed to Italy and there to study Fascism with an open mind and with the same scrupulous care as he has studied Bolshevism. An essay from his pen on Fascism would doubtless prove a most valuable piece of constructive criticism. Dare we say that he would come to acknowledge the fascist principle, which, in the place of the principle of *Laissez-Faire* : "Each for himself for the good of all," re-

proclaims the Christian and Mediæval ideal of "Each for all, and all for God"?

If Mr. Keynes had traced the history of *Laissez-Faire* still further back than that which he actually does, he would have found that it issues as a logical consequence of the mentality engendered by the Reformation. Then it was that the great revolt of Individualism against authority was made manifest. This and the special influence of Puritanism, the emphasis placed on the lessons to be drawn from Old Testament history, the theory that good works, a moral life and energetic pursuit of one's vocation were a proof of predestination, of election to salvation, gradually transformed society from the form which the influence of the Church had given it during the Middle Ages, to the one we see around us now. The maxim "each for himself, for the good of all" (which contains a fatal *non sequitur*) came thus to take the place of "each for all and all for God." Capital came to be valued, not for what it could procure in the interests of the community, but as an accumulation of wealth for wealth's sake, the holders of which, characterised by the virtues of energy, enterprise, independence, zeal and dogged pertinacity, became the saints of the new order; and so Capitalism came into being, Capitalism which thrives on *Laissez-Faire*.\* Fascism would alter

\* Cf. Eustace Dudley, *National Resurrection*, (Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1926).

this; but it discards the socialist formula that prescribes, as a remedy, the nationalisation of the means of production, considering this as a mere *reductio ad absurdum* of Capitalism.

Mr. Keynes shows in more than one place that he has no love for Capitalism, the essential characteristic of which he admits is "an intense appeal to the money-making and money-loving instincts of individuals as the main motive force of the economic machine." But he appears to accept it as inevitable. At any rate, for the moment he appears to limit his vision of the possible remedies to an improvement in the technique of Capitalism and to judicious control by the State. On the other hand, he readily admits "that the fiercest contests and the most deeply felt divisions of opinion are likely to be waged in the coming years not round technical questions, where the arguments on either side are mainly economic, but round those which, for want of better words, may be called psychological or, perhaps, moral." In this he is undoubtedly right, and it is precisely on a moral question that Fascism is mainly fighting its battle. Fascism fully realises that the desire for wealth must always remain a motive force of the economic machine, but denies that it need be always the main motive force. An intense appeal to Patriotism and Religion are the lines on which it is operating, coupled with an attempt to give to society

a structure wherein, on the one hand, the artisan, the peasant and the professional man (into whose work other motives than that of money-getting predominate) may be particularly encouraged, and on the other, industry and commerce come to be organised on a corporative basis with definite social and political functions attached to each Corporation. Gradually it is hoped that, as these organisations develop, as legislation feels its way more and more effectively in the direction of extirpating the usurer and the manipulator of values, and as, contemporaneously, the religious spirit comes to penetrate again the very bones of society, as it did in the Middle Ages, a transformation of economic conditions away from Capitalism will come to be complete without either reducing the majority of members of society to the position of mere wage-slaves of the State or impairing in any way the productive power of the community.

IX. In much of the above there is already implied the fascist conception of Liberty, which I propose to consider next. The fascist conception of

*Liberty.*

Liberty is very clear and very concrete. As we have already seen, the authority of the State must in any case be limited by the Moral Law. There must be no overstepping of this limit. The individual possesses by nature certain personal rights, rights which belong to him, because, though he cannot live except

as a member of society and under the authority of the State, they are not subject to State interference as having authority to do with his position *qua* member of society, but as having solely to do with him as an individual and as a member of a family. This is a corollary of the Moral Law. Hence the *State has no right to coerce an individual in any way beyond what is necessary to safeguard and promote the collective interest; and any form of coercion in excess of what is strictly required to achieve the divinely ordained end of the State, that is, the general good, is to be condemned.*

The line may not always be easy to demarcate in practice; but the principle is clear. The rights of a father over his family, for instance, the family itself, which is the real cell on which the State is built up, the vigour and solidarity of which cannot be, besides, weakened without grave consequences for society itself, must be respected by the State. Children must not be forcibly removed from their parents, without urgent and grave reasons touching the general well-being. The father and mother, moreover, have certain paramount claims with regard to the education of their children, especially with regard to their moral and religious education. No State has the right to persecute an individual with respect to his private opinions and private relations, as long as they remain private. It is impossible to coerce a man's Conscience and Reason;

and to attempt to do so is wicked. Nor can the State allow a member to die for want of the means of subsistence ; and, as a corollary to this, the right of the individual to acquire property for himself and his heirs becomes intangible. The individual likewise has a right to be protected by the State against slavery or virtual slavery, against interference in his home and in his personal affairs by other individuals ; against the invasion of his home by State officials without legal warrant ; or against condemnation without fair trial and in accordance with the laws of the land. Rousseau's plea that " all defence, all guarantees against the power of the State are illogical, in that it is impossible for the body to wish to do violence to its members," is a lie. We know it to be possible ; and the business of the State, with this general principle before it, is to frame laws to protect the individual against any possibility of such violence. The line of demarcation should be drawn more and more finely, as experience teaches, by a carefully-thought-out code of Law, designed to this end—laws protecting the family, property, the individual Conscience, hired labour and the course of justice, etc.

The liberties which such laws would safeguard are concrete liberties, inherent in the moral notion of an individual's natural rights. But no man possesses the natural right to propagate any personal views he likes,



ENRICO CORRADINI,  
*Founder of Italian Nationalism.*

to destroy wealth, to attempt to disrupt society. Any liberties beyond those which appertain to his natural rights and which may be granted to the individual in excess of such rights are such as the State, in legislating, calculates will prove beneficent to the community as a whole, invigorate it, vitalise it, and so give individuals the opportunity for a better and higher life. Such liberties are definite and concrete, as all liberties should be. There is no such thing as freeing man in the abstract.

Liberty is and can only be a concrete thing, a right admitted by principle or conferred and limited by Law in the interest of collectivity. This, indeed, is the old English idea of Liberty. There was a happy time when Englishmen spoke proudly of their liberties. Too often now they vapour about Liberty in the abstract.

Liberty, moreover, is a relative question. As Mussolini has pointed out in one of his most characteristic speeches : "Liberty is not a right, it is a duty. It is not a concession granted to us, it is a conquest. It is not a matter of equality, it is a privilege. The notion of Liberty changes in time. There is a Liberty for times of peace and another Liberty in times of war. There is a Liberty for prosperous times, another for lean times. . . ." Serving God, which means identifying our individual good with the good of the whole body of our fellow-men, is the only true freedom.

We have already pointed out that the world is not so governed from above that private and social interests always coincide ; and that it is the duty of the individual so to contrive that his private interests do so coincide. When he fails to do this, the State has a right to interfere. Thus, an individual has a right to own and acquire property, but if he systematically destroy the value of his property by impoverishing the soil, for instance, by over-cultivation, or by cutting down the timber unduly in order to realise immediate profits, or even if he merely neglect to develop it, that State has a right to interfere. There is no natural right that confers on man the right to do exactly what he likes with his own, beat his wife, starve his children, work out his property, sell himself into slavery, commit suicide, any more than the State has a right to do anything whatever that it pleases. The Moral Law steps in and must step in everywhere to regulate the limits of what constitutes rights one way or the other. And so it is the State's duty to base its laws on the Moral Law and if in all legislation this principle is systematically kept in view, not many mistakes are likely to be made in practice.

"Liberty," as Leo XIII. said,\* "is a power perfecting man and hence should have truth and goodness as its object." Liberty to tell lies or propagate evil is licence,

\* Leo XIII., Encyclical "*Immortale Dei*," 1885.

not Liberty—and for the State to protect society against lies and against evil is in reality liberating society from the bondage of sin. As Mdlle. Aline Lion, one of Gentile's most able pupils, keeps drumming into her readers in an essay published in the Hibbert Journal (January, 1927), "Liberty implies Law." If people would only get this little fact into their heads, they would not only begin to understand Fascism, but begin to see all life in truer colours. People who would disrupt society, break down the State, turn class against class, are the worst enemies of true Liberty. True Liberty is indeed preserved by the very denying of the right of individuals to raise their hands against the State and against God. So, upon this criterion, Fascism has, in effect, brought up to date the old laws of treason, to include every kind of activity engaged in for the purpose of betraying, breaking up, endangering the safety of the State and of public morality—such as the preaching of class warfare, the advocacy of the suppression of private property and of measures which would weaken the family tie, the entering into or recognition of seditious associations or international associations claiming a superior allegiance to that of the authority of the State, artificial birth restriction, pornography, blasphemy, open defiance or contempt of authority, and so forth. Even liberal Governments suppress and censure such things as pornography and

physical cruelty to children and attempts to undermine the discipline of the forces of the Realm—in other words, they do draw the line, in practice at least, against gross immorality and treasonable propaganda. Fascism, which does not fear for its popularity, which has not to pander to the velleity of individuals, has merely the courage to dot the i's and cross the t's, to draw the line quite fairly where it logically and reasonably lies. In doing this it promotes no loss of Liberty.

The fascist policy of political centralisation coupled with administrative decentralisation is another case in point. There must be no room to allow of the country being divided against itself. But this identification of Liberty with Law is no newly discovered truth. It is an eternal truth, enunciated as long ago as Aristotle, emphasised again and again by the Scholastic philosophers of the Middle Ages. Perhaps, however, only now have political conditions so evolved that its application can become fully realisable, and from the application of this principle by Fascism to modern conditions, a new conception of citizenship may be said to have been inaugurated. I will quote again from Mademoiselle Lion : "Liberty implies Law. The citizen implies the State. The employer or the employed, implies the productivity of which one employs and the other is employed . . ." so that Fascism has come to proclaim, as the basis of citizenship, the consciousness of citizen-

ship, the sense of responsibility towards others, and the maxim *everything for everyone who shall deserve it through moral sacrifice and productive activity*. Or again, as de Maeztu would put it, man has political rights by virtue of his functional value in society.\*

X. The next point to emphasise, and a very important point it is, is the sharp distinction which Fascists make, with respect to political principles, between what is absolute and what is contingent. The general theory of the State, such as has been described above, enshrines certain main absolute principles, on which an indefinite number of secondary absolute principles depend. But the greatest care must be taken not to regard as absolute principles those dictating a particular policy, contingent on circumstances. The principle of *Laissez-Faire* is a case in point. This is entirely a question of policy, of means to a given end. It enshrines no absolute principle, except the negative one that there is no such absolute principle. The same may be said of all forms of Government *per se*, whether popular or otherwise, provided they can claim to fulfil properly the purposes for which Government is divinely instituted.

Mussolini has flattered the compatriots of William James and Charles Pierce by declaring (or so it seems,

*Absolute  
and Con-  
tingent  
Principles.*

\* Cf. Ramiro de Maeztu, *Authority, Liberty and Function* (Allen & Unwin, London, 1916).

if we take certain reports as accurate accounts of interviews conceded by him to American journalists) that he is in certain respects a Pragmatist. On various occasions, too, he has praised Fascism for its "freedom from dogma." What does he mean by this? He simply means that Fascism does not dogmatise with respect to any particular form of Government or to any particular policy, provided that, whatever form of Government or policy be chosen, it fulfils the general purposes of the State. One form of Government *per se* has no better claims than another. The pragmatic test, *e.g.*, whether the desired useful consequences, given the purposes in view, result or may be calculated to result, is the only test by which to determine the best form of Government, within the limits imposed by the Moral Law in given circumstances. In other words, Mussolini rightly considers that the best form of Government is the one, which, in the given circumstances of a particular country, works best.\* So

\* There is no doubt, too, that Mussolini himself, in the growth of his interior life, has been greatly assisted by the pragmatic method and, for all I know, even by the works of William James. But William James is, unfortunately, not very felicitous in his mode of expression. He appears to enunciate a number of propositions which, according to the letter of what he says, are easily proved to be false, such as, for instance, that "all true ideas are useful," "all useful ideas are true," "no ideas of ours are true, except those which we can verify," "all truths are mutable, except principles and definitions," etc., etc. (William James, *Pragmatism*, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1907). The real message of value, it seems to me, that William James appears

Fascism does not and cannot absolutely condemn popular Government, for instance, or parliamentary Government. Nor does Fascism, conversely, stand absolutely by the idea of the "Corporative State," the form of Government which, in Italy, it is bringing into vogue. These matters are contingent matters, and they remain contingent even if, as in the case in point, certain forms of Government come to be rejected by experience as hopelessly unsuited in general to promote the common good and certain to desire to "get across" comes to this: certain of our fundamental beliefs—many dogmas of Religion, for instance—are not absolutely verifiable. But they can be tested, as scientific hypotheses are tested. Do they explain the facts better than any other hypothesis? What is the result on conduct in subscribing to them, in that "every theoretical difference somewhere issues in a practical difference?" For it is obviously true that we are what our honest beliefs make us. Different religions or ways of belief make the whole difference to our mode of life. Turn a Mahommedan country into a Christian one, for instance, or *vice versa*, and in a few generations the place is transformed. If you have, therefore, a clear vision of the type or ideal of life and civilisation you desire to see grow up in or round you, the way of belief which in practice produces that type or ideal will be for you, if not the truth or whole truth, at least that body of doctrine to which, in practice, you allow yourself to submit, even if you allow yourself at the same time to entertain an intellectual doubt as to its actual veracity. From this position it is a very small jump to complete intellectual acquiescence. Many people who have had the misfortune to be deprived of sound doctrinal instruction, have indeed found their way to Christianity, groping, so to speak, along this path; and many more would do so, if they only realised how essentially interdependent are dogmas and conduct. You often hear people, whose reasoning faculties have been inadequately trained, exclaiming that the Christian ideal of life seems perfect to them, but "we are not going to have anything to do with its dogmas." What do they mean by this? They mean that either they have not the courage or intellectual honesty to give up paying homage to a way of life, which, in reality, means nothing to them,

others be calculated as likely to prove efficient instruments. It is all a matter of judgment. Therefore, rules of practical expedience, based on experience and common sense, however they may approximate to

or that they are prepared to live on the moral legacy left them by their forbears, but are too illogical or dull to realise that there would have been no legacy at all, were it not for the dogmas believed in by their forbears, and too lazy to trace the inevitable connection. You cannot honestly have it both ways. An honest Unitarian cannot behave quite in the same way or approve quite the same way of life as a man who believes in the Trinity. So if you really believe, as Mussolini came to realise by experience, that the Catholic Christian way of life is the best, you are driven inexorably, if you are of courage and sound logic, to becoming, by the grace of God, a Catholic. And the same might be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of any other form of religion.

*Cf.* also A. G. Moore, "William James' Pragmatism," (*Philosophical Studies*, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London, 1922).

To conclude: Mussolini's admiration for James or, to take other examples, Sorel or Nietzsche, is due to the incidental influence which the opinions of these men happen to have exercised on Mussolini's mind in certain decisive phases of his development. Sorel, for instance, undoubtedly helped to open Mussolini's mind to the pettiness, the materialism, the mean ideology of his Socialist contemporaries educated on the doctrines of Marx; while Nietzsche brought home to him the truth that the multitude must be led by the few and hence the necessity of an Aristocracy which represents the refinement, the exaltation, the embodiment of that kind of individualism which is worthy of encouragement, namely, the capacity of individuals to realise themselves in harmony with the good of the community to which they belong, the capacity of transcending themselves, of making themselves worthy of that Communion of Saints, which is the blessed goal of every individual. His admiration for or gratitude to these men, however, does not make him their disciple. A false prophet may very well, despite his heresy—for all heresies having any wide diffusion succeed only by virtue of the truths that they contain—prove to be the turning influence of the life of a true prophet. It would be dangerous, therefore, even if it were not known to the writer to be untrue, to conclude that Mussolini, in praising James, Sorel, or Nietzsche, looks upon the writings of any one of these philosophers as representing in any sense a full or balanced view of the truth.

absolute principles, must not be confounded with absolute principles.

XI. There remain two important points to elucidate: Fascism and Democracy; and Fascism and Empire.

*Democracy and Empire.*

The importance of these points deserves that a whole chapter be given to the consideration of each. Sufficient has, however, already been said to explain what was meant by my allusion in Chapter I to the possibility of some country, like Japan, for instance—in no sense an heir to the Roman tradition, conforming its institutions to the fascist conception of the State. If the complete theory of the State which I have propounded is the product of European thought and civilisation, the greater part of it is applicable to all States indiscriminately, even though its full application and development may be impossible outside Christendom, or, in the last resort, outside Catholicism. Here lies the only reservation. Much of it is already universal in practice, wherever Society is found to be in a healthy condition; for it is a theory firmly established on reality and one wholly in conformity with Natural Law. The Peculiar Roman or European element in it begins where Christianity has in its unrivalled manner transcended the Natural Law by the highest Moral Law. Hence a vigorous Eastern State like Japan may in fact be nearer the fascist ideal in practice than many a decadent European or American

contemporary, despite the latters' Christian heritage.\*

Or further light may be thrown on this point if we put it in this way :—It is as clearly obvious that a Catholic need not necessarily be a Fascist in any practical sense, as it is obvious that a non-Catholic may, on the other hand, be one. But a non-Catholic Fascist will find himself, within the debatable territory which even the strictest theologian admits, in agreement with the fundamental Catholic conception of the State, and will recognise in the last resort the need for an independent moral authority, such as the Church claims to be, in order to provide the coping stone for any truly perfect polity.

\* Unfortunately it is often the corrupted form of the great European heritage (its individualistic egoism, its materialism, its mechanical aspects) that are better known and more frequently imitated in the East. In certain respects, the world being what it is, this may be necessitated in self-defence. But it is a strange paradox that so many Chinese Nationalists, for instance, have Europeanised themselves in so many ways just when a true and cultivated European begins to be ashamed of his own example. To take a small matter: European dress. If I were a Japanese or a Chinese Nationalist, I would wear my beautiful national dress, which in most cases is also extremely practical, instead, in the false desire to be modern, of adopting the hideous clothes worn by European men. A Japanese Fascist should look upon the wearing of his national dress throughout the world as a symbol of his sincere faith. The East has much to teach the West and a higher world civilisation depends very largely on the East and the West assimilating the best of each other. Unfortunately often the contrary is the more apparent; and it would be as well for the progressive Nations of the East to acquaint themselves better with the valuable side of the great European heritage, that which is the outcome of Roman and Catholic civilisations, rather than of its corruptions.

## CHAPTER IV

### FASCISM AND DEMOCRACY

THE word "Democracy" has various meanings, to many of which Fascism is not only not opposed, but positively favourable; to others it is unfavourable; to one particular meaning it is absolutely opposed. It follows, therefore, that we must carefully distinguish what we mean when we use this familiar word.

*Various  
Meanings  
of Demo-  
cracy.*

Originally the word was always used in a bad sense. Aristotle calls a Democracy that perverted type of State, the normal form of which is a Polity. His well-known classification of the various types of State holds good even now:

(i) States in which authority is concentrated into the hands of one person, *e.g.*, a Monarchy in its normal form; a Tyranny in its perverted form.

(ii) States in which authority is exercised by relatively few persons, or by one or more few classes of persons only, *e.g.*, an Aristocracy in its normal form; an Oligarchy in its perverted form.

(iii) States in which authority is exercised by a relatively large number of persons or by all free subjects irrespective of class distinction, *e.g.*, a Polity, in its normal form, a Democracy, in its perverted form.

It is curious that the word universally adopted in modern times to express a popular form of Government should be precisely the word which in old times designated a corrupted form of popular Government only. It is more than curious. It is significant. It is, to those who have studied History and Philosophy, delightfully ironic.

The perverted form in any case is the one whereby authority is exercised with a wrong intention and according to wrong principles. Consequently, as a matter of fact, a Monarchy, in the absolute sense, may prove every bit as good a form of Government as an Aristocracy or a Polity. Nevertheless, as Aristotle himself is at pains to point out, it is very easy for any of the three types, taken absolutely, to become perverted; and experience shows that some kind of mixed form of Government is likely to prove the less easily perverted. But any form of Government whereby authority is exercised by many, would already appear to be a kind of Polity. Therefore we may conclude that a Polity, whereby authority is exercised by many, but in accordance with a system of checks and balances, wherein the more responsible offices are held by an

Aristocracy of intelligence and morality, wherein there exists one office of outstanding or unifying authority, is likely to prove, in practice, the best form of Government. With this conclusion Fascism completely agrees. It is a practical conclusion, not an abstract conclusion. It involves no absolute principle, but a sound contingent principle based on common sense and experience.

Using the word "Democracy," therefore, in one of its modern senses, *e.g.*, as equivalent to a "mixed Polity," Fascism may claim to be as democratic as any other political creed. Fascism, in other words, definitely stands, as a practical policy, for a Constitution "broadly based upon the people." Such a practical idea of Democracy as this is essentially traditional. It is advocated, not only by Aristotle in the fourth century before Christ, but by St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century and by Suarez, the Jesuit, in the seventeenth century. We have no quarrel with Democracy in this sense.

Then there is a second meaning of Democracy with which we have no quarrel, the sense in which homage is paid to the ideal of "equal opportunity," the sense in which we speak of every man "carrying in his knapsack a Marshal's baton."

Now, we know that this ideal is never wholly realisable. Men are not only not born equal, but are also

necessarily born into conditions where the opportunities for advancement widely differ. If it were possible or desirable to eliminate the unfit at an early age, remove all children from the control of their parents at the age, say, of six ; see to it that up to that age all received equally an adequate amount of nourishment, protection and hygiene ; and if, subsequently, all were educated by the State in more or less equally efficient establishments, and none allowed to benefit by the accumulated wealth of relations or friends, we might indeed approach towards the realisation of the ideal. But such an ideal is not only impossible, but undesirable—in that it would mean sacrificing the family, which is the most sacred institution in the State, as well as many other things, which make for responsibility and variety, desirable in themselves.

The ideal of "equal opportunity," therefore, is in any case somewhat of a chimera and, in any absolute sense, both undesirable and contrary to nature. But in the ordinary practical sense of the term there is nothing objectionable in the ideal. On the contrary, there is everything in justice to be said for it. We require that the more responsible offices of the State be filled by the best people, by the people best fitted to occupy such offices, by people conspicuous in intelligence and morality ; and such virtues are not the prerogative of any one class. Hence it is right that

the State Constitution should allow of its being possible to draw on every class indiscriminately for its officials.

The Catholic Church is an example of an organisation which, in practice, approaches closely to this ideal in its ordinary unexaggerated meaning. The humblest priest, whatever his origin, carries in the folds of his "ferrajolo" (so to speak) the Triple Crown. Countless Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals and Popes have sprung from the humblest origins—however nature may impose its limitations on the completely free application of the principle. The sins of the parents are visited upon the children even unto the fourth generation. This is one of nature's most stringent laws limiting the application of the principle. So also, the possession of a certain independence of means and of "family" is an advantage which can never be denied ; nor is it desirable that it should be denied. To come of a well-to-do and refined stock produces qualities which could not be produced otherwise. Nor is it possible to eliminate the advantages given by other accidents of birth. A parish priest of China, for instance, must necessarily, from a point of view of promotion, be at a disadvantage in comparison with a parish priest of, say, Rome.

Nevertheless the equal opportunity of advancement afforded within the Church is as near perfection as is possible and desirable, and this practical sense of the

ideal is an undying Latin tradition, dating from ancient Roman republican times. Even under the Empire, however in practice the ideal was discounted, as a theory it was never abandoned. The principle of an hereditary Emperor was never juridically admitted. The highest post in the Empire was always theoretically reserved to the Roman citizen who held the most apt combination of qualities ; and when the Roman Empire became Christian, to be a Christian, to be a Catholic (the terms were then identical) was merged in the conception of citizenship.

Fascism, which is nothing if not traditional, is wholly at one, then, with this practical ideal of equal opportunity. So it is wholly democratic in tendency in this sense also ; and if it departs from this principle in any particular, as, for instance, in favouring an hereditary Monarchy, it is for reason of utility. The advantages of an hereditary Monarchy are numerous. By it, above all, is insured the continuity of the State at all times ; and though some form of Republic, like the Venetian Republic, having a president or Doge, elected for life, or rather selected, by some elaborate method calculated to result in the choice of a man truly representative and belonging to no particular Party to fulfil the highest post in the State, is an alternative form of Government to that of a limited hereditary Monarchy, with much to recommend it, the balance of advantages,

under present circumstances, in most modern States, remains, I dare say, with the latter. In any case, it is not a matter on which to dogmatise.

Thirdly, there is another meaning to the word "Democracy" with which Fascism accords. I mean that "Demophily" such as is recommended by the Popes.\* Here Democracy merely means a special zeal to give the labouring classes, who are oppressed in the modern world as scarcely ever they have been before, those humane conditions of life which not only Charity, but Justice dictates.†

Apart from the above meanings, however, Fascism is very much opposed to Democracy. We have already dealt with Democracy in the sense that Rousseau gives it or in some other sense by which the "general will" is made the sole legitimate authority. In these senses I will refer to it as "Democratism"—that religious myth of Democracy, which has nothing directly to do with the advocacy of Democracy in the sense of a Polity, as above described. "Democratism" is a dogma, not a policy. It is the dogma of the Sovereign People, the falsity of which I have already and exhaustively exposed, the dogma which would make us bow down inexorably to the "general will" and make us all the slaves of mere number. It is a form of political

\* Cf. Leo XIII., *Encyclical, "Rerum Novarum,"* 1888.

† Cf. Jacques Maritain, *Charles Maurras et le Devoir des Catholiques.*

Pantheism, of "Naturalism," which would make of the State a very God. It is not necessary for us to discuss it again here.\*

So now we come to the last meaning of the word "Democracy," the meaning which really, and justly so, is confounded with that perverted type of Polity which Aristotle condemns—"mob rule." From this principle Fascism turns away in disgust.

But there is a contingent side to this point. Does modern parliamentary Government, coupled with a *Parliamentarism* wide franchise, necessarily identify itself with "mob rule"? The answer is: *not necessarily*—that is, if we mean by parliamentary Government merely some form of popular and elective Government. The mixed type of Polity which Fascism favours is not an unpopular form of Government. But Fascism would certainly say that a form of Government whereby the people at large do, in fact, elect a practically supreme Parliament, is bound to tend towards mob rule, even where "Democratism" is not the order of the day. It is all a question here of degree, of machinery, of the presence or absence of constitutional checks, of the presence or absence of other checks, such as a *de facto* governing class, of habits, sound traditions, etc.

\* Cf. Jacques Maritain: *Charles Maurras et le Devoir des Catholiques* (Librairie Plon, Paris, 1926).

If we have a wide electorate and a practically supreme popularly elected Parliament, and if, at the same time, homage is widely shown to "Democratism," the plunge towards mob rule will be rapid and difficult to retrieve without Revolution. If, on the other hand, "Democratism" is repudiated by those who speak for the State; if a healthy tradition, dating from a time when "Democratism" had not developed into a popularly accepted Gospel, remains powerful among the people; if theoretical constitutional checks still remain on the Statute Book, however seldom invoked; if, in fact, there exist a governing Aristocracy firmly entrenched in the State bureaucracy, then no great harm need be feared from such a form of Government. In given circumstances it may even have a balance of recommendations in its favour. This is how Fascism would judge the matter.

When we come to look at the Constitutions of France, say, or of Great Britain, or of Italy before the fascist Revolution, the question enters the realm of practical politics. That Italy was drifting rapidly towards mob rule during the generation preceding the fascist Revolution, few will gainsay. That the condition of France, whose spokesmen openly preach "Democratism," appears to be very similar to that of the old Italy, there seems no reason at all to doubt. The case of Great Britain, however, is not so clear.

There "Democratism" is not so explicitly avowed as in France. Nevertheless, it is very generally avowed and often implicitly avowed in the speeches of responsible English statesmen. This alone constitutes a great danger. On the other hand, in England the bureaucracy is still largely in the hands of the public-school man, who, with all his faults, holds steadily to a number of sound traditions. This is undoubtedly the most powerful check extant in Great Britain against the degeneration of the State into a condition of mob rule. But the public-school system has also its dangers, in that it has resulted in a cleavage of English social life into a rigid caste system. However deferential and kindly disposed the "Toff" may be to the "Bloke," the Bloke is made to feel his inferiority and he resents it. In France and Italy no such caste system exists. Fascist Italy is far more democratic in this sense than England. Nevertheless, the existence of the Toff in England is certainly a bulwark against mob rule; so, too, is the existence of certain, however weak, constitutional checks. The whole tendency, however, appears to my judgment decidedly bad. The caste system, as well as the cleavage between economic classes (in Great Britain particularly marked, in that Capitalism has there developed in Europe as nowhere else), is generating explosive material. "Democratism" in one form or another is already widely regarded as Gospel

truth among the ill-instructed masses. The public-school man is not so powerfully entrenched as he was. The popularly elected Parliament is subject, in practice, to fewer and fewer checks. I should say, therefore, that Great Britain has been for some time sauntering down the path that leads eventually to the abyss and has now reached a turning where the gradient has become suddenly much steeper. France, on the other hand, has already gained a dangerous momentum further down. Both have meantime lost the companionship of Italy, who has turned round and is laboriously trudging in the opposite direction; and both are beginning to wonder if Italy is not right.

That is, roughly, how I would diagnose the situation. But we may conclude, in any case, that there is nothing in parliamentary Government, as usually understood, inherently pernicious. Nevertheless, coupled with whatever advantages it may possess as a practical system, it is open to many objections. In expounding a few of these objections, further below, I shall not be referring to those who would idolise the "general will." Such people are past praying for; and I can only refer them back to Chapter II, with the gentle reminder that, whatever may be said for their idol, parliamentary Government is no mouthpiece of it, because, as I have already pointed out :

(I) The sum of individual wills, even if unanimous, is not the same as the "general will."

(II) Where are you to draw the line as to the enfranchised and disenfranchised? For, if you leave out any class, with any claims to being reasonable, you make the result still less approximate to the "general will."

These, of course, are no arguments against parliamentary Government. They are, however, absolutely damning arguments against the idea that parliamentary Government follows as a logical consequence of setting up the idol of the "general will." Those who believe in the "general will" have not only to scrap Rousseau and fall back on a more brutal, more materialistic Philosophy still in order to justify their God, but invent a new method of consulting him. It would be interesting to hear what method they would now put forward.

As for a justification of majority Government, apart from this absurd attempt to harness it to the chariot of the idol of the "general will," it generally rests on the idea of force; *e.g.*, that what the majority wishes cannot be avoided because the majority possesses the force; and that, therefore, it is better to count heads than to break them.

*Majority Govern-  
ment.* This notion is an absolute fallacy. The majority of any body of opinion is always (except in moments of

intense excitement and in conditions when the result is practically a foregone conclusion) led by a minority. In the first place, therefore, you create the force before which you must bow down—in other words, by advocating majority Government on the above plea, you are making yourself, not the slave of the majority, in the abstract, as you suppose, but the slave of a system which would create for you your majority. Secondly, quite apart from this point, if you really wanted to give power to those who held the preponderance of force on their side, you would not be so illogical as to enfranchise women and old men. More logically you would limit the franchise to the Army, or, still more logically, to the Artillery, the Air Force and the Tank Corps only. Thirdly, you would, in any case, have to make voting obligatory and insist on clear majorities in every constituency by means of some electoral device or other. For at present few parliamentary Governments are backed by a majority of votes. On the Continent, where there are many parties in the field, where frequently some system of proportional representation maintains, this is almost unknown. In England it only occurs by coincidence. The present Conservative Government, for instance, in spite of its overwhelming parliamentary majority, is actually returned on a minority vote. On the Continent again, or in Ireland, under a system of many Parties or of

proportional representation, the Government shifts continuously, not in accordance with the will of the majority of the electorate, but in accordance with the various manœuvres of groups inside Parliament scheming for a turn of office. Moreover, though in a sense Government does and must rest on force, the greatest of all forces is, in the long run, Reason. Is there any cause to show why a majority, if it is not a majority among qualified judges or among a body of persons sitting in deliberation and very equal in their status of education (when we may, as a general rule, justly conclude that *pars major præsumitur sanior*), must necessarily possess the better Reason? None whatever. And this leads us to the consideration of one of the great objections to parliamentary Government, with or without a majority behind it. Does it make for reasonable Government? Is it a system tending to throw up an Aristocracy of intelligence and morality?

As a matter of fact, the system puts a premium on men with a gift for speech, rather than on men with a gift for cool judgment. We know that not one-tenth of the members of the House of Commons are fitted to hold the rank of Cabinet Ministers. Most of those who reach that rank would, even as it is, be lost, were it not for the permanent official behind them with his technical knowledge. The choice of competent Cabinet Ministers and Under Secretaries of State, under a

parliamentary system, is extremely restricted, as all Prime Ministers know. Under a parliamentary system, as generally understood, we are giving full play to the tendency of allowing ourselves to be governed by a host of amateurs in politics, generally with little to their credit but the gift of the gab, unless it be some slight administrative experience to be compared with that of a Club Secretary—amateurs, too, who make, not politics, but a political career their profession for the sake of the publicity it gives them, which they so love. Nor does the system put a premium on morality to compensate for the premium it sets on mediocre intelligence. On the contrary, that man has the advantage who is unscrupulous in his promises and sly in getting out of them; who is not ashamed of beating up voters with a big drum; pandering to the gusts of public sentiment; exploiting the ignorance and even the misery of the common man.

No joint-stock company, in spite of the fact that here the shareholders have a definite and defined right to have a direct say in the management of their affairs by vote, would dream of adopting such a system. Any such company that did so would soon be in the hands of the receiver. Imagine Mr. Derrick and Lord Seepage, whose turn it is to retire from the Board of the Down-our-way Petroleum Company, but are both eligible for re-election, circularising the shareholders

before the next annual general meeting, with a "Vote for Derrick and big dividends," and a "Vote for Seepage and safety, with a big bonus to follow," at the head of their respective pamphlets. Would any of us, before such a spectacle, invest our savings in such a company? Never for a minute. Yet the far more technical and complex business of running a State competently we allow thoughtlessly to be carried on under a system that, if suggested for any other kind of business, would be ridiculed out of court.\*

\* In England, as we have seen, for special reasons the system works better than in most places, though none too well. The removal, therefore, of some of its worse features might prevent the breakdown which otherwise, given a few decades, looks inevitable. With some such limited programme in mind, I would suggest the following constitutional reforms:—

- (1) Make the family (the real social cell) instead of the individual the basis for the suffrage (see below).
- (2) Give the elector the right to vote against anyone or all *en bloc* of the parliamentary candidates in a given constituency as an alternative to voting in favour of any one of them—in other words, give him the right freely to refuse altogether the choices made by the Party machines, thus compelling, if necessary, new elections with new candidates.
- (3) Institute second elections in order to insure that no member be returned without securing his quota of votes, which must be at least equal to the total number of votes cast, divided by the number of candidates. Thus, if there were three candidates and 10,000 votes recorded, no candidate could be elected unless he secured 3,334 votes, *after deducting any adverse votes*.
- (4) Make voting obligatory.
- (5) Cut down the total membership of Parliament to not more than 10 members per 1,000,000 habitants.
- (6) Contrive to make (and to set up machinery for the purpose of revising and maintaining) the constituencies—all of which should be single member constituencies—roughly equal in population.

Again, who in his senses imagines that an electorate, even if confined to persons of education, is capable of deciding any important technical issue with any justice—Free Trade *versus* Tariff Reform, for instance—a valuable opinion in regard to which requires the possession of a special knowledge of the Science of Economics and an enormous amount of technical and statistical data to which this knowledge must then be applied. Finally, no Party, under the ordinary parliamentary system, dares put forward a measure, however good, if it runs the risk of unpopularity. What Government, for instance, resting on a parliamentary majority, would have stayed in office a week in any country, with such a Bill as the Gentile Education

(7) Insist on the public auditing of Party funds, together with the periodical publication of the names of all contributors.

(8) Restore the powers of the House of Lords to equal those *in every respect* enjoyed by the House of Commons, but contemporaneously make of the House of Lords a true House of Faculties, composed, that is to say, of:

- (a) Only a very restricted hereditary element.
- (b) A large number of *ex-officio* life appointments (a proportion of the Bishops of the Established Church, certain high dignitaries of other Christian Churches, Presidents of the Royal Society and similar bodies, retired Chief Permanent Secretaries of the more important Ministries, retired Ambassadors, ex-Viceroy and ex-Governors of Dominions, Chiefs of the Imperial General Staff, First Sea Lords, Admirals of the Fleet, Field and Air Marshals, the Lord High Chancellor and the Lords of Appeal in ordinary, the Lord Chief Justice, the Master of the Rolls, the President of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division, the Lord President of the High Court of Scotland, the Lord Justice Clerk of the Scottish Judiciary, and the Chief Justice of Northern Ireland).

Reform Bill on the table of the House? On its main provisions hardly an expert in Italy disagreed as to its merits. It was a wonderful measure, but it meant that every household would be affected in the sense that it would immediately become more difficult for the young members of the family to pass their examinations and acquire those much-sought-after diplomas, which, on the Continent, mean a great deal towards obtaining so-called respectable "black-coated" employment. Moreover, the measure wrenched the whole teaching

(c) Life representatives appointed by the Councils of certain recognised professional Associations (Doctors of Medicine, Surgeons, Engineers and Architects, University Professors, etc.), and

(d) A limited number of life appointments selected from among Privy Counsellors of at least one year's seniority, not already entitled to sit by virtue of some other qualification.

The hereditary element I would suggest restricting to :

(a) Princes and Princesses by blood closely related to the King.

(b) Peers and Peeresses in their own right of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, whose title to sit dates from the reign of James I., who have reached the age of 40.

(c) Representative Peers (or Peeresses in their own right) of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland elected severally by their peers in the proportion of 1 to 25.

With regard to the suggested family vote, the idea is a very simple and logical one. Theoretically you enfranchise everybody indiscriminately—men, women and children; but you restrict the right to exercise the vote to :

(a) Married men and women.

(b) Men and women who have reached the age of, say 30, but you give an extra vote to the father or male guardian of a family for every child or ward who has not attained the right to vote—or, alternatively, to the mother or female guardian of a family, if the father be dead or absent in some qualified sense. The father or

profession out of their rut and put them, so to speak, "back to school," to their great personal inconvenience. The consequence was a howl of protest, wherein the voices of countless disappointed fathers mingled with those of injured vested interests. Only a form of Government, which protects the Government from the consequences of unpopularity, would ever have enabled such a Bill to become Law. Who knows, indeed, how many useful measures have never even been contem-

mother, as the case may be, would also have the power to enfranchise their children or wards at any time within their own discretion. Such a law would confer absolutely equal rights on men and women, except the prior right of the father to exercise the additional votes. Thus the male vote would predominate. So, likewise, would the vote of those bearing the greater responsibilities. Finally, the system would place the centre of gravity of power between the responsible but vigorous ages of 35 and 55.

(9) Reduction by concentration of portfolios in the number of Cabinet Ministers.

(10) Drastic local Government reform under three headings :

(a) Simplification and reduction in number of the various and multifarious types of local authority, with the object of introducing economy and greater administrative efficiency, the elimination of overlapping, etc.

(b) Much further decentralisation in the technical and administrative sense; centralisation, on the other hand, in the political sense.

(c) Introduction of the Corporative system on the Italian model, but adapted to English needs, as the basis on which local authorities should be constructed.

(11) Ministers to have the right of speaking, but not of voting, in both Houses. This provision is rendered necessary by the institution of a non-Party House of Lords.

(12) The office of Lord Chancellor to be made a life appointment.

plated under parliamentary régimes, merely because they would have meant governmental suicide ? The truth is that the parliamentary system makes Government the panderer to popularity, on the one hand—gives power to the masses to decide innumerable issues about which they cannot possibly have the knowledge required in order to exercise a sound judgment—and for the rest it is only too often a game, which flatters the masses into thinking they are the masters, but in reality is played by a limited number of wire pullers.

This might be tolerable, if the result were happier or the players of the game somewhat more respectable. As it is, we have little to comfort us, and the question arises, why do we acquiesce in this state of affairs ? Because there is no alternative system ? Nonsense. There are countless examples of political institutions in history, many of them eminently successful, to copy or to adapt. As many more could be drafted by any body of constitutional lawyers. Why then ? Because, I believe, we have drifted ; and because our minds have been poisoned. We have drifted from an older type of Constitution, which was inherently sound under different conditions, into an evolution of the same in a wrong direction under the influence of the false ideas which the French Revolution and various other materialist schools of political Philosophy disseminated during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Fascism, in freeing opinion from the hypnotism of these false ideas, has made it possible in Italy to look at the parliamentary system, as it is generally developed, for the first time objectively. What are its practical advantages ? What are its disadvantages ? In the light of an unprejudiced examination, under Italian conditions at any rate, there is so little to be said for it, that, even among the opponents of the present régime in Italy, it has few defenders outside the dispossessed clique of professional politicians. If the same problem could be examined elsewhere, with equal absence of prejudice, on the sole criterion of advantages *versus* disadvantages, I wonder how the system would fare, say, in France or in England. I believe very little better. Fascism in this has shown itself a great emancipating movement. It is like a breath of fresh air in a stifling room.

## CHAPTER V

## FASCISM AND EMPIRE

I REFER the reader back to Chapter I for the definition of Empire. An Empire is a particular form of State ; and, as I have already shown in Chapter II, it comes into being naturally like any other form of State, according to circumstances. Generally speaking, it is a form of State that succeeds historically the city or tribal State, but precedes the national State. For, as I have reiterated more than once, the vitality, and so the very justification, of an Empire is exhibited in its power of assimilation, that is, its power of welding into a single national State its various heterogeneous elements by creating within its limits a single national or super-national sentiment—and thus ensuring political progress.

Nor, as I have shown, is there anything inherently wrong, aggressive or unstable in the imperial State.

*Imperial-  
ism.* We have, therefore, to ask : Why is it that Imperialism has come to enjoy to-day such a poor reputation ? We find it denounced everywhere,

in every class of society, and used by many almost as a term of abuse. In every country we meet, indeed, a handful of self-styled Imperialists, proud of the appellation ; and there are, of course, the statesmen of imperial States, who naturally defend the Empire, for whose destinies they are responsible, in act and speech, while the Empires themselves, where vital, of their own momentum carry on. But even among the statesmen of these Empires, in their speeches it is not hard to detect, very commonly, an apologetic note, an effort not to emphasise the imperial character of the State overmuch ; and a vein, which smacks of hypocrisy in their mouths, where they speak of the Empire as a burden, a burden for the fastening of which on the people's backs, it seems, the rapacity of past generations of less mild men must be held responsible, which they cannot, however, in duty bound renounce without doing more harm than good.

The reason for this doubt lies in the history of Europe since the Pagan Renaissance, when Religion decayed and lust for power became the order of the day. It is, alas, true that modern Imperialism has exhibited the ugly side, not so much of Imperialism, as of human nature. Out of the lust for power and wealth, by the rapacity, indeed, of past generations of less mild men, the foundations of the modern Empires of the world have been largely built. So, too, in part were built the Roman

Empire and many other ancient Empires. But the fact remains, as the edifices arose, in many cases at least, the ideal of a vast political progress arose with them, so that the original idea of domination for the sake of power and self gave way to the idea of assimilation for the sake of political progress and a higher civilisation. And, if, under the humaner lights of the spirit of the day, the imperial States would now examine their consciences, they need have no cause to be ashamed of themselves if they would only face their task henceforth with a right intention and according to those right principles, which every State should, indiscriminately, follow if it would accomplish the purposes for which it is divinely instituted. An Empire may be a burden, if you like, but it is also an opportunity and a privilege—an opportunity for carrying a great part of the world a step further along the road of political progress, a privilege by which the best of a particular tradition may be spread for the advantage of others.

Unfortunately many of those who are proud to call themselves Imperialists are of the very type which merits our reprobation, Militarists and adventurers, men without an idea in their heads beyond themselves, men without religion, greedy financiers, hunters of wealth for wealth's sake, men with the eyes of fish. But there are some, many of whom are or have been simple soldiers and sailors, who have learnt to think

imperially in the way they should. It is for these to leaven the rest.

So, too, in spite of the humaner spirit of the day, the world is still suffering from the greedy atmosphere it has breathed during the past few centuries. There is much in this humaner spirit which springs rather from exhaustion than from a change of heart. Men have become more nervously sensitive, not more morally sensitive—or so it seems. The final justification of the Empires of to-day can only be accomplished with a truly positive change of heart.

But do not let us exaggerate. The Empires of to-day, no less than the Empires of yesterday, have not by any means been all built up on avarice and lust. Empires exhibit natural growth. The conditions of the world are not static. Empires grow, filling up by divine right the voids created by States in dissolution, by anarchy intervening. The State which is strong, that carries its head high, as every State should, whose citizens are loyal and enterprising and sane and healthy and prolific, the State that has much to give the world, will inevitably grow under favourable geographical conditions, expand, become an Empire, assimilate her parts, become a greater national State, expand again. This is the real way in which Empires are built even in the worst periods. The lust and the avarice of private individuals

*The  
Fascist  
View of  
Empire.*

and of statesmen, which, in all times, in varying degrees (fallen human nature being what it is), have characterised the growth of States, are, almost invariably, if we examine the phenomena carefully but broadly, episodical compared with nature's thrust of life, which, hating a void, imposes expansion, in the dynamic conditions of the world, on those States in whose veins life runs strong and generously.

This, in the first place, is the fascist view of Empire. Therein, in a sense, in the Biblical sense, it takes no thought of the morrow. Rome was not built in a day. And if fascist Italy again becomes worthy of an Empire, inevitably an Empire shall she possess. Without any aggressive intent, without any militarism, her Empire will grow, the work of God rather than of man.

The struggle for existence is another matter. It has nothing to do with Empire, though out of it, Empire

*The struggle for existence.* may grow. A State has a right to fight for its life. This is a law of life, from which none of us can withdraw. The world is not one State yet, meting out justice for all ; and in this world of comparative anarchy, the unprepared State will succumb. A sense of this reality is not incompatible with the highest ideals. On the contrary, the greatest idealists are the greatest realists. Idealism, in this sense (not the philosophical sense) is contrasted with materialism, not realism. The average English-

man, whose logical sense, under his present dispensation, has been left deplorably untrained, is apt to confuse materialism with realism, idealism with ideology ; and thereby, owing to his practical talents operating perspicaciously despite his confusion of thought, he has, not altogether undeservedly, earned the name of humbug.

The struggle for existence in a world of comparative anarchy as between States may inevitably lead to further wars. Not so the ideal of Empire, as Fascism would interpret it. And if the world at large, if the big Empires that to-day control the raw materials and the empty spaces fit for colonisation, hem in a vital and prolific nation, not naturally enjoying the possession of abundant raw materials and empty spaces for her sons to settle in, and prevent, thereby, that Nation from maintaining a proper standard of life for her sons, by closing their doors to colonisation and exacting a monopoly toll for the raw materials on which her industry may thrive, it is they who will be responsible for any wars that break out in consequence of such a Nation's right to live and to enjoy a better life.

The chief hope here for accommodating matters, lies, perhaps, in the work of the League of Nations. If the League succeeds in not rendering itself sterile in the futile aim of maintaining, for the sake of an illusory peace, static conditions in a world which is necessarily dynamic,

*The  
League of  
Nations.*

the League will justify its existence. Otherwise, it will be the cause of war, rather than of peace, like one who invites an explosion by the bottling up of steam in a confined space.

Italian Fascism at first looked askance at the League. It hoped little of a League, founded under the auspices of an ideologist like Wilson, a League that looked like the fulfilment of a prophecy by such a false prophet as Rousseau, planted in the fatherland of Rousseau and Calvin, and engendered in the cynical atmosphere of the Paris conference, a League whose assemblies have been characterised by the worst examples of fulsome, demagogic, hypocritical oratory and by political manœuvres recalling the worst features of parliamentary log-rolling, a League, too, whose most enthusiastic supporters spring from the ranks of just that sort of political sentimentalists with whom Italy at home will have nothing more to do.

But Mussolini's idealism, his realism, his capacity for piercing the veil of mere appearances, has gradually brought his followers round to a rather different view of the League. From an attitude of doubt and disapproval, an attitude of cautious hope has arisen, coupled with a determination to make use of the League as an instrument to promote justice and equity, as between States, rather than peace at any price. Fascists never disputed that the League was capable

of doing much good, in any case, in a minor way by uniting and concentrating within itself, with a view to better efficiency, the many international organs required to serve the international life of States, and by providing a new and useful weapon for diplomacy by conference together with machinery for conciliation, arbitration and the judicial settlement of disputes, etc. But Fascists consider that, in order really to serve humanity, the spirit of the League must be transformed in a more objective sense, aim at justice rather than peace-at-any-price, and come to be moulded by the legal mind rather than by that of the politician. They hold it to be more important to build up International Law by the gradual process of working from precedent to precedent, and to define principles of equity in accordance with the doctrine of objective rights based on the functional value of States, than to extend the League's rôle as an international *gendarme* in this stage of its career.\* This is now Italy's attitude towards the League.

But to return to the question of Empire, there is

\* Cf. Ramiro de Maeztu *Authority, Liberty and Function* (Allen & Unwin, London, 1916): "An International Law based exclusively on Treaties would make present frontiers eternal . . . War itself is more violent but less unjust than such an abominable aspiration." The attempt to do so is largely responsible for the failure of the Hague Conferences, and may yet account for the failure of the League of Nations.

another point, embodying the fascist conception of Empire, other than what has been described already, requiring to be elucidated. I have shown the task of Empire to be assimilation as a means to higher, more integrated political unities ; and the power of assimilation depends on good, strong Government, just laws and the influence of what the Germans call *Kultur*, which is best rendered into English, albeit sounding a little affected, by the quite literal translation into "culture."\* A Nation can, of course, have a worthy culture, or an unworthy one ; but in any case, the influence of culture in the task of assimilation shares with Law the major place, and may even be said to include Law. It is, in effect, all that a Nation spiritually stands for. It is the concrete expression of a Nation's tradition, the genius, one might say, of the Nation, that which Religion and Philosophy, more than anything else, determine in the long run.

Empire, therefore, is indissolubly connected with a culture, an idea, a type of civilisation, a way of approaching the problems of life. Hence there is a sense in the word Empire which transcends its territorial sense ; and this is its spiritual sense, its really more

\* Unfortunately the word *Kultur* has earned an evil savour, because the German *Kultur*, so widely advertised before and during the War, happened to be impregnated with the false Idealism of the leading German philosophers.

important sense, in that its territorial sense is but a ready-made receptacle to receive the spirit. But the spirit may, after filling the receptacle, be defused beyond it. A powerful national State, respected among other States, with a great civilisation, a great culture, will exercise inevitably a powerful attraction beyond its frontiers. It will influence the culture of other Nations. It will have an assimilating effect beyond what is strictly its own province ; and this influence in itself is a kind of Empire-building. It is, in fact, the finest form of Empire-building, for it conquers without destroying life, that is, by the sincere flattery of imitation, so to speak, only.

Fascism would create for Italy also an Empire such as this. And it will inevitably do so, if Italy has anything of real importance to give the world. And if, besides the importance of its gift, that gift be truly good, those who might thus become spiritually influenced by Italy would never have anything to regret. All-conquering Rome was in many ways spiritually conquered by little Greece and proudly handed on the culture of Greece, blended with her own, to the world at large. Italy appears, indeed, to have a genius for conquest of this sort. It was largely by Italian agency that Rome in the person of the Church spiritually conquered Europe again and created the

great European civilisation of the Middle Ages, on the foundation of ancient Roman Law. The culture of the Italy of the Renaissance, yet a third time, mixed blessing as it turned out to be, made something of an universal conquest in a later age. And now we have the fourth Italy, with a new universal message, a culture in the making, which is a balanced synthesis and direct development of her own and Europe's traditional past, anxiously claiming to be heard. This book gives some indication of what this message is and what it means. Italian Fascists hope, nay believe, it will, for one thing, mean—slowly, slowly, in the course of many generations, but inevitably—the free reunion of Europe, of Christendom, under the leadership again of the dual Rome, that of the Pope and that of the Emperor. When Italians speak of Empire, it is of this that they are chiefly thinking. It is of this that the new Italy is fondly dreaming and preparing herself to achieve. But the chief means that Italy intends to employ to this end is just this, very simply : to give the world in herself an example of a new and perfectly balanced social equilibrium within the unity of a strong and vigorous national State acknowledging the moral supremacy of the Catholic Church. She would thus show the world, which is hankering after such an equilibrium, the way to achieve it, and would invite all and sundry to follow her and join with her in the

making of a new and better political and social synthesis, built on the old traditions.

But if this ideal be a worthy one and represent truly the right road for all to follow, the sooner others, besides Italy, take to it, the better ; and if anyone can, in friendly rivalry, there take the lead from Italy, to him the greater glory. All on this road are welcomed as equals ; but God will assign to the most vigorous and zealous, to the one who can achieve most perfectly the task of harmonising her own interests with those of the world at large in accordance with principles of universal justice, the honour of *primus inter pares*. The Roman idea has no restrictions of place or person.\* In the pursuit of this ideal, because of its universality, there can be no exclusiveness. There is room for all. If pride keeps anyone away, so much the worse for him.

\* Cf. James Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire*, Chap. VII, "The Theory of the Mediaeval Empire," (Macmillan & Co., London, 1922, revised edition).

## CHAPTER VI

## THE WELTANSCHAUUNG OF FASCISM

THE present *Weltanschauung* of Fascism may be summed up in one word: *Youth*. Fascism would have men look at the world with the eyes of a well-knit young man, the Knight Chivalrous; and if I were asked to choose an appropriate motto for Fascism, it would be "*avðpiðseðθe*," "*Quit ye like men*." I remember this was the motto of my old school, St. Aubyns, Rottingdean; and maybe the ideals that were instigated in me there have contributed to my enthusiasm for Fascism now. Rottingdean, in those days, was also the home of Kipling, and it was then, if I remember rightly, or very shortly afterwards, he wrote that extraordinarily stirring little poem "If," which sums up all that is best in Kipling's ideal Imperialist, all that is best in the English public-school spirit. I will quote it in full, for it conveys the sentiment of one half of the *Weltanschauung* of Fascism:

" If you can keep your head when all about you  
 Are losing theirs and blaming it on you ;  
 If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
 But make allowance for their doubting too ;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,  
 Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,  
 Or being hated, don't give way to hating,  
 And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise :

" If you can dream—and not make dreams your master ;

If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim ;  
 If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
 And treat those two impostors just the same ;  
 If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken  
 Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,  
 Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,  
 And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools :

" If you can make one heap of all your winnings  
 And risk it on one turn of Pitch-and-toss,  
 And lose, and start again at your beginnings  
 And never breathe a word about your loss ;  
 If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew  
 To serve your turn long after they are gone,  
 And so hold on when there is nothing in you  
 Except the Will which says to them : ' Hold on ! '

" If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,  
 Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,  
 If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,  
 If all men count with you, but none too much,  
 If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,  
 Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,  
 And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son ! "

The poem expressing the other half of Fascism's *Weltanschauung* has still to be written, that which

would make Kipling's man complete—a right religious sense, a delicate sensibility, all that Christianity added, in fact, to perfect what was best in the ancient world, the Greek spirit of enquiry, the steadier Roman virtues of *Gravitas* and *Pietas*.

It may be objected that the modern Italian does not conspicuously shine for his modesty or discipline ; but it is precisely for this reason that Fascism in Italy is laying particular stress upon these virtues. Sober the modern Italian already is, enterprising and hard-working, and exceedingly pious in the Latin sense of the word, which implies the reciprocal devotion between parents and their offspring. But he has a long way to go yet to acquire, nationally speaking, the whole gamut of fascist virtues. So have we all. But if we move about to-day among Italy's young men and women, especially of the upper middle classes, the nobility outside the international cliques, the sons and daughters of the professional classes and of the peasant, the signs are extraordinarily encouraging. These young modern Italians seem to be set on combining the sporting, fair-play, chivalrous qualities of the public-school class in England, with greater intelligence, greater alertness, far greater consciousness of responsibility, a more genuine sense of Religion and artistic sensibility. The children of the new generation, the born-after-the-War, are a

veritable joy to behold. They are already immeasurably superior to the children I remember in the days before the War—and this of all classes. They are healthier in their bodies, better fed, healthier in their minds, better educated. They have learnt to make thought and action one, to do what they say, to say what they do, to stand up for their own opinions, to be courageously sincere and sincerely courageous. To hear them singing their fascist songs as they go marching out of a Sunday, little boys and little girls in their most attractive "Balilla" uniforms,\* is both touching and inspiring. The seed is well sown and it will ripen gloriously. Of this I have not the shadow of doubt ; and I cannot believe anyone can doubt it, who knows Italy profoundly, as I do. The difficulty in Italy (and this may prove to be the same elsewhere) is not with the very young, nor yet any longer with the young men between the ages of 18 and 25, who, under fascist discipline, have been amazingly transformed during the past few years. All the farousherness, the vulgarity, the "exhibitionism" so often apparent during the first period, have been ground out of these. But the middle generation, the men between 30 and 45, represent a more difficult

\* The fascist Boy Scout and Girl Guide organisation is known as the "Balilla," named after a Genoese boy hero, who started the revolt against the French occupation by throwing a stone at the foreign soldiery in 1746.

proposition ; and I doubt if they can, as a whole, be transformed into the complete Fascist.

This generation is born of one when it was the fashion to suppose that the discoveries of Science were in hopeless contrast with the truths of Religion, an illusion now, happily, completely dissipated. Their parents gave them either too little religious instruction or unintelligent, over-conventionalised instruction, and they fell easy victims to the *Zeitgeist*. Their eyes are now, indeed, opened, but the religious void in them remains ; for they were already whole men, when the breath of Fascism caught them up—and it is difficult for any but those with some flair of genius, or else for the exceptionally thoughtful, without some special Grace, to fill up this void, created during their school days. The average man, especially in Italy, where competition for the better jobs is particularly severe, where there are few with the means to afford the leisure required for reading and reflection, cannot easily make a complete conversion. The War, nevertheless, redeemed this generation. The War, more than anything else, as any impressive experience, hardship and suffering usually do, opened their eyes to the curse that attaches to Materialism. Intensely patriotic, made deeply conscious of the truth that a Nation is worthless unless imbued with the spirit of discipline and self-sacrifice, they at least acquired the

merit of allowing themselves to be led by the better ones among them and by Mussolini, who is a generation ahead of his own. But they are too many of them stamped by the defects of their up-bringing—too many boasters, too many self-opinionated, too many over-fond of rhetoric and of making, at all costs, a “ *bella figura*,” as they call it : cutting a fine figure—anything to be able to show off as just one better than their companions. Most of the troubles of Fascism in Italy are owing to the breaking out of these defects of this generation, which, though it made Fascism, cannot aspire to be its fulfilment.

The speeches of Mussolini and of the Secretary to the fascist Party, Signor A. Turati, have only to be read and it will be realised how hard the leaders of Fascism hammer the rank and file, who will not or cannot live the fascist ideal. But the process is undoubtedly telling and the result is a new generation growing up, who promise to make a governing class really worthy of the ideal. And in connection with the bringing up of these younger men and women, nothing has struck me more forcibly to the credit of Fascism than the manner in which it has saved them from that wave of unchastity and irresponsibility which elsewhere has proved one of the most serious consequences of the War. The plea which young men are apt to put forward to excuse or sanction periodical

acts of immorality—the plea that it is good for health—is now ridiculed as the hypocritical homage that self-indulgence pays to virtue. That barbarous snobbery which parades immorality and the capacity for hard drinking as a token of virility is now at a discount. Young Fascists are taught to realise, not by lectures, but by experience, that when we keep our bodies fittest, our desires turn least to immorality ; that one form of more easily controlled self-indulgence, such as an over-indulgence in food or drink, leads to others ; that creative work of any kind—work to which we can give ourselves with passion—or the healthy excitement that sport and civic responsibilities afford us, are as easy a means, and a far more satisfactory and a more pleasureful means, besides the only right means, of working off our surplus psychic energy. Any other means, after all, is a waste of life ; and waste is sin. The *Weltanschauung* of Fascism, in putting a premium on creative and recreative activities, has gained for Italy a notable victory for the cause of chastity and sobriety. The knight chivalrous that Fascism exalts is, indeed, the very antithesis of the gay Don Juan. The latter type, in fact, is one of those that Fascism will not tolerate in any disguise or at any price.

The Italian knight chivalrous, however, is perhaps not quite the same person as the one associated with the term in the romantic North. He is anything but a



AUGUSTO TURATI,  
Secretary of the Fascist Party.

Parsifal, that curious invention that would make an ideal type of the innocent fool, nor yet does he share the more humane simplicity of a Sir Galahad. If I were to choose a real historical figure which responds most nearly to this Italian ideal, I would mention Federigo da Montefeltro, first duke of Urbino, the greatest captain of his age, astonishingly humane in a century distinguished by its callousness, brave, normal-minded, sincerely religious, robust and virile, yet combining with all these soldierly virtues, a culture and subtlety of mind only rivalled by his contemporary, Lorenzo. For myself, I endorse this Italian ideal. To my mind there is no more attractive type of man than the intellectual and cultivated soldier ; and this may be said to be the very type of the knight chivalrous of Fascism. As the Fascist refrain goes *Libro e Moschetto, Fascista perfetto*, that is, Service and Understanding, wherein a sound, practical, realistic sense is mated to a balanced, artistic and speculative intelligence.

But the complete knight chivalrous must indeed be also a true follower of Christ. Above all, he must forget himself to find himself. He must remember that we are all members of one another. He must learn to love greatly. He must transcend his own self to assert it through the very negation of its empirical nature, to use a form of expression, consecrated by Gentile, which may be more intelligible to some modern

minds than the simpler Biblical text. Moreover, a man can lose himself thus only in one way—and this is the secret of Youth—in *activity*, whether it be practical or intellectual, an activity which is also a creative passion and therefore born of love for his fellow-men. As the most typical of Italian philosophers and by far the greatest of them all, St. Thomas Aquinas, said, so simply and yet so adequately : *Unumquodque . . . secundum naturam hoc ipsum quod est, alterius est*,\* and again : *Pars habet inclinationem principalem ad actionem communem utilitate totius*.†

\* St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sum. Theo. I*, q. 60, art. 5.

† *Ibidem*, 2<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>ae</sup>, q. 26, art. 3.

## PART II

## SECTION I

### GENERAL REMARKS

I PROPOSE to give, in this second part, which is intended as a kind of Appendix to Part I, a summary description of a few of the more important applications of fascist doctrine in Italy. As I pointed out in the Introduction, the constitution, public institutions and laws suitable to the conditions of one country may be quite unsuitable to another. Though a political Philosophy, to have any validity, must indeed have a universal application, its actual application must necessarily vary in different circumstances. Nevertheless all the civilised States of the world to-day have a great deal in common ; and inasmuch as this is so, any successful applications of a doctrine in one civilised State may be usefully examined by others with a view to adaptation, if not to exact reproduction.

The time is not yet ripe for a detailed description or for a final criticism of the concrete applications of fascist doctrine in Italy. The present situation in Italy is transitional. The new constitution, the new public

institutions and laws are in course of being brought into being. The process is as yet by no means complete. I am accordingly confining myself here to a summary description with the special purposes in view of illustrating the foregoing thesis and of arousing interest in the various measures already adopted, or foreshadowed, measures well worthy of attention and study by all who claim to be practical politicians and aim at finding a happy solution to our present discontents.

To this end, and in order to understand the full significance of this legislation, the student should perhaps particularly bear in mind the following principles, which are continually, if only implicitly as a rule, being referred to in the text of the fascist laws.

1. Fascism regards it as the duty of the individual so to contrive his life that the pursuit of his interests coincides with those of the community. The State is and can be the only impartial judge as to whether the individual is doing this or not. If he is not, the State has the right and duty to interfere.

2. Private initiative in the field of production is considered as a general rule the most efficacious and most useful instrument in the interest of the community (*cf.* Art. 7 of the Labour Charter, section VI); and thus the institution of private property is sanctioned as a natural right, whereby the family tie, the most important

and fundamental of all ties, is strengthened; which makes, more than anything else, when widely distributed, for true Liberty.

3. Private property, however, is also a public trust. If a man's subjective rights to private property are abused, if he fails to exercise his rights in a manner which corresponds with a sense of responsibility to the community at large, he becomes liable to having his rights curtailed or even abrogated altogether—that is, not in general, but in the particular department where his sense of duty has failed him.

4. We may say, indeed, that Fascism sanctions an objective, "functional" theory of rights.\* Similarly, this sense of responsibility, which a true sense of Religion, which family affection, which patriotism and a consciousness of nationality provide, is the only true basis of citizenship, that is, the eligibility to assume responsibilities in the Government of the country. In other words, only those persons with a public conscience are fit to exercise public responsibilities and are therefore entitled to political rights.

5. Consequently the State cannot tolerate the propaganda of ideas which may reasonably be said to undermine Religion, the Family and the State; and

\* Cf. Ramiro de Maeztu, *Authority, Liberty and Function* (Allen & Unwin, London, 1916).

not only is it, therefore, the duty of the State to censure the propaganda of such ideas, but to prosecute individuals who, by disrespectful word or action, bring Religion, the institution of the Family and the main institutions of the State (the King, the Prime Minister, as responsible head of the Executive, Parliament and the Law Courts) into contempt.

6. Furthermore, it is the duty of the State to do what is possible so to construct society that it becomes easy for the individual, in the pursuit of his private interests, to make his interests coincide with those of the community ; and its duty is to do everything in its power to raise the moral standards of the people and to encourage their sense of communal responsibility and self-discipline.

7. Individuals cannot serve two masters. They cannot own allegiance to a political body outside the State, such as a political *Internationale*, as well as to their own country's Government. They must choose ; and if they prefer the former, they must be and deserve to be treated as foreigners.

8. Co-operation for the good of the whole must be the order of the day. Consequently those in charge of local Government or of autonomous public institutions must not be permitted to pull at variance with the general aims of the central Government. Hence,

whatever measure of administrative decentralisation may be deemed advisable, political centralisation is essential. So likewise only those class associations who admit the principle of class interdependence and the paramount interests of the community as a whole, whose constitution, moreover, is a guarantee of their *bona fides* in these respects, can be recognised by the State and be granted the right of representing their class economically. Here we have in a nutshell the idea of the unitary State, so often referred to by fascist writers. Hence the State must aim at becoming one organic whole, in which the individuals composing it, by organising their collective activities, are integrated with the State institutions, so that all may pull together towards a common goal.

9. Class warfare may, in certain circumstances, be a fact ; but it is not a necessity. Those who would have class warfare are agents for dividing the country against itself, and a house divided against itself will not stand. Hence such persons must be classed with those who deserve to be deprived of political rights. But, in saying this, it is important to make a distinction. Class warfare must not be confounded with that individual competition, given the dynamic conditions of life, for the better posts and a higher social status, which makes it possible to classify broadly into categories those who

may be said to be pressing to rise and those who may be said to be resisting the pressure. This, which Fascists call the "struggle of capacities," and not class warfare, is, of course, an eternal social fact. In other words, the auto-defence of individuals, categories of workers and classes must give way to the State's justice.

10. The State, whose only interest and duty it is to promote the general good, is the only power capable of taking an impartial view in the interests of the whole between individuals or individual groups, whose interests come into conflict. Hence, if any such conflicts fail to be settled in the first instance by friendly discussion between the parties it is the duty of the State, by means of a constitutionally appointed Court, to settle the dispute and enforce the settlement (*cf.* Art. 5 of the Labour Charter, section VI).

11. Party Government is not a necessity in the Government of a country any more than it is a necessity in the management of a business. Constructive and effective criticism is necessary on the other hand for proper Government. But constructive and effective criticism may be provided by other means than by opposing Parties, just as it is provided (and in abundance) within the constitution of public companies.

12. Government must in any case not be in a position

to have to court popularity. Popularity is no measure of good Government. Similarly, a majority is no sanction for a Government measure, unless it can be shown that the view of the majority is the better view. What is required of Government is that as few mistakes should be made as possible in the public interest. Whatever machinery of Government results, therefore, in the fewest mistakes, is the better machinery. The specific sanction of a Government is its power, its ultimate sanction, however, is its reasonableness. Any Government, whether resting on a majority or otherwise, will, if it has the power to enforce its laws, exact obedience. The ultimate legitimacy of the laws enforced does not depend on the number of persons in favour of them, but on their justice and reasonableness ; and unless it can be shown that majority Government is, taken as a whole, absolutely the best means that experience has devised to insure reasonable Government, it has no claims for pre-eminence. Since, moreover, there is no conclusive evidence that this is so, the claims of majority Government must be judged objectively without prejudice in its favour in accordance with the circumstances of the case.

13. Means, too, must be devised, as we have seen, by which the central Government may be kept in touch with the needs of the indefinite number of parts which

make up the whole community, like a good nervous system in a living body. Consequently some kind of representative system must be devised. But the precise nature of such representative system is a matter of objective contrivance.

14. The executive power should be strong and capable of acting swiftly. It is expedient, therefore, that, as in the American Constitution, it should be in many respects independent of the Legislature.

15. The complexity of modern life, the great interdependence in a modern State between the parts, the swiftness of communications, etc., require the modern State to shoulder an ever-increasing burden of responsibilities and to engage in evermore manifold activities.

This fact must be faced and the State adapt itself positively to the task, not lag behind it reluctantly until circumstances force it to take action in accordance with the old Liberal principle. The dogmas of *Laissez-Faire* and a *minimum* of Government control are dead.

## SECTION II

### HETEROGENEOUS LEGISLATION

THE accumulation of Fascist legislation in Italy is truly colossal. There exists scarcely a department of public life that has not been touched. A whole and ample treatise deserves to be written to demonstrate the value of the work accomplished, a value which can hardly be exaggerated. Four great pieces of legislation, however, stand out as landmarks characteristically fascist, namely, *the Law on the attributions and prerogatives of the Prime Minister*; *the Law defining the powers of the Executive*; *the Law of the Corporations*; and *the Labour Charter*. A section will be devoted to each of these laws and a fifth section to the general question of parliamentary representation, the exact form of which has not yet been decided on, but can be foreshadowed. The present section will, after giving some idea of the remaining legislation already passed, deal a little more fully with the Reform of the Administration and the creation of the "After-Work" Institution.

The greater part of what is dealt with in this section

is scarcely controversial, unless we except the Local Government reforms. The remainder may be said to be what other previous Governments talked of doing and aspired to do, but only the fascist Government has been able to carry into effect.

We have already referred to Gentile's great Education Act, which stiffened the standard of examinations;

*Education.* made it more difficult for unnecessary numbers of boys and girls to obtain the required qualifications at the expense of the State in order to compete for "black-coated" employment; canalised those unable to pass examinations, entitling them to pursue their studies at the classical and literary higher schools, into technical schools; put the teachers themselves back to school during the whole of their career, thus forcing them to keep abreast with new knowledge and methods; encouraged private schools by the institution of the State examination; reduced the number of State-aided universities; restored religious teaching in the elementary schools and provided for it at all State schools, etc., etc., etc.

Then we have the financial reforms and achievements: the unification of the three State issue banks;

*Finance.* the conversion of the State budget deficit of 3,029,000,000 Lire for the year 1922-23 into the handsome surplus of 1,155,000 Lire by the year 1926-27. Similarly the State Railways

budget's enormous deficit has been converted into a surplus. The same applies to the Post and Telegraphs budget (the telephone service was handed back to private enterprise, which has resulted in a great improvement and in the introduction of the automatic telephone). These results have been brought about, moreover, without increasing taxation and without resorting to inflation or loans (with the exception of the "Littorio" loan (1927) raised for the main purpose of converting short-time treasury bonds). At the same time the internal national debt has been reduced by 7,634,000,000 Lire; the international debt questions have been satisfactorily settled with Great Britain and America; the instalments on these debts have been regularly paid, (the first instalment to America, be it said, by private and voluntary subscriptions); money has been found for electrifying considerable sections of the railways and for largely renewing the rolling stock and improving the services, so that the trains now run punctually, provide second-class sleepers, and are clean. Further, no less than 6,000,000,000 Lire has been spent between the years 1922-1926 on public works, housing, road and railway construction. Then the amount of paper money issued on account of the Government has been halved and the value of the Lira brought up from 110 in 1922-23 to 89 to the £ sterling. Lastly, no

less than 12,000,000,000 Lire have been expended on rehabilitating the war-damaged districts.

Altogether, for a country that is reckoned from 20 to 40 times poorer than Great Britain and is peculiarly deficient in raw materials, possesses insignificant colonies and a congested population which increases by 470,000 souls annually,\* these results seem almost miraculous. They have been achieved solely by sound principles of finance, by a fearless economy (for example, the number of State employees has been reduced by 80,000; the number of railway employees per axle-kilometre from 62 to 32), by a vigorous enforcement of taxation and a complete overhauling and readjustment of the incidence of taxation, which has brought with it at the same time greater justice for the poorer man.†

Next, there has been accomplished a complete reform of the Army on the principle of quality rather than quantity. The Navy, too, has been reorganised and an Air Force created, where before there was none worthy of the name.

*The Fighting Forces.* But the actual expenditure on the Army and Navy in comparison with the amounts spent before the War (after taking into account the fall in the value of the Lira and of the purchasing power of gold) has been reduced.

\* The figure for 1925. In 1926 the figure had dropped to 420,000.

† It should be noted that death duties for the first and second degrees of inheritance have been abolished.

Then we have the conclusion of over forty treaties with foreign powers, many of a solely commercial nature, others of friendship, others embodying the principle of arbitration (for example with Switzerland, Albania, Germany and Spain). A law has been passed, moreover, to provide for the mobilisation and organisation of the civil population in time of war.

Again, the Judiciary has been reformed, procedure speeded up and the various High Courts of Appeal unified. The police has also been re-organised.

But it would be superfluous here to extend the list, although a somewhat more complete list would deserve to contain examples of many important minor measures passed into law, such as the reform of the unification of the Mining Law, and the important and original Law protecting authors' rights, besides the many temporary measures adopted for the defence of the realm, the Press Law\* and

\* There is nothing that calls for special comment in the Press Law except the one clause that makes a newspaper liable to confiscation should anything be published considered likely to result in a disturbance of the public peace. This clause may be interpreted arbitrarily and so may result in restrictions of the liberty of the Press beyond what many may consider expedient. It is justified, however, in the circumstances, given the revolutionary conditions still existing in Italy, the inflammability of the Italian character and the previous licentiousness of the Italian Press. The remaining clauses merely extend the list of Press offences to include specific appeals to violence and the disruption of the State,

the suppression of secret and subversive organisations. So let us conclude our general survey *Recodification of the Laws.* by mentioning the drastic reform and recodification of the Commercial, Civil and Penal Codes (not yet complete),\* the creation of a number of new autonomous State institutions, such as the *National Militia*, the *National "Balilla"*

*New Autonomous State Institutions.* (*Boy Scout*) *Institution*, the *After-Work Institution* (see below), the *Royal Academy*, the *Patronato Nazionale* (see below), the *A.G.I.P.* (the National Petroleum Company), the *Central Statistical Institute*, and the *National Institution for the Protection of and Assistance to Mothers and Children*.

The latter, together with the *National "Balilla"* *Institution*, forms part of the magnificent work accomplished for protecting the physical and moral welfare of the race. These measures *The Moral and Physical Protection of the Race.* are supplemented by a number of others dealing with juvenile courts, the white slave traffic, prostitution, alcoholism, smoking by the young, hygiene, provisions to combat malaria, contempt of the State's institutions, deliberate untruths and obscenities—offences which make the newspaper liable to prosecution.

\* The draft of the new Penal Code has recently been published and has been given an especially warm welcome in Catholic circles, in that it is based on the theory of individual responsibility and not on the modern "positive" theory of Law. Its sanctions are particularly severe with regard to matters touching public morality.

tuberculosis, venereal diseases and other "white plagues," the control of indecent films and theatrical representations, the prevention of the sale of pornographical literature and artificial birth-control propaganda, workmen's insurance against old age, invalidity, accidents, sickness and unemployment. Most of these reforms bring up the standard of social legislation in Italy to equal the best in other countries and some of them may be said to constitute important advances.

*The Reform of the Administration* has resulted, as we have seen, in a reduction of the swollen bureaucracy by no less than 80,000 persons, although at the same time the work of the State *Administrative Reform.* administration has been largely increased.

This is accounted for by the independence of the Executive (see below), who have thus been given a free hand to reorganise, by better organisation, by large administrative decentralisation and by the concentration or unification of many of the Ministries. Thus the Ministry of Finance and the Treasury have been amalgamated, a Ministry of Communications and a Ministry of National Economy created, in which are now grouped governmental departments that were formerly separate, often with a Minister of their own (such as the Ministry of Agriculture, which is now absorbed by the Ministry of National Economy).

Steps have been taken, too, to prepare the way for the creation of a Ministry of National Defence, absorbing the three Ministries of War, Marine and Aeronautics. A Chief of the General Staff, with a department, has, for instance, already been organised to co-ordinate the three arms, while Mussolini himself has for some time been in charge of all three Ministries.

The most fascist, however, of the administrative reforms apply to local government. Here, as we have seen, the principle lies in administrative decentralisation, political centralisation. To this end Sub-Prefectures have been abolished, the Prefectures increased and the system of Mayors has been abolished. In the small towns the supreme direction of local affairs is now carried out by an officer nominated by the Crown, called by the mediæval title of *Podestà*, assisted by a communal secretary and in most cases by a small advisory *junta*, one-third of which is appointed by the Provincial Prefect, two-thirds appointed by the local trade and professional organisations. In the larger towns, besides the *Podestà*, one or two Vice-*Podestàs* are similarly nominated ; but in this case he is assisted by a Council of between ten and forty members nominated by the Prefect from a list (of three times the number of seats to be filled) prepared by the local industrial and professional corporations, and possessing wide powers of control. In Rome a Governor takes

the place of the *Podestà* and in Naples, for the present, a High Commissioner, both with extended powers. This scheme has certainly resulted in higher efficiency and better co-ordination. The *Podestàs* are administratively responsible to the Prefect, whose approval is required for all local bye-laws ; they are unpaid (save in very special circumstances) and they must possess certain educational qualifications for their appointment.

The Prefect of the Province, who is the supreme governmental magistrate in local affairs, is responsible for the maintenance of public order and for co-ordinating the administration of his Province. He also is assisted by a small council, representative of the Corporations. His powers are very wide and he is responsible directly to the Ministry of the Interior, which has instituted a permanent service of inspection to report on local conditions and on the efficiency of the administration with a special view to the economical expenditure of local public funds.

The whole administration of the country has thus come to be organised as a hierarchy of powers. Public servants are divided into three classes, namely, secretarial, accountancy and what in England corresponds to the second-division clerks and employees. The salaries paid are equalised according to rank throughout the administration, including the fighting forces and judiciary, the highest-paid officials at the summit of the

hierarchy being the President of the High Court of Appeal and Field-Marshals.

Perhaps the most notable of the new autonomous State Institutions founded by the Fascist Government

*The After-Work Institution.* is the *After-Work Institution*. Its object is to provide interesting, physically healthy, mentally and morally uplifting activities for the working classes after their hours of labour. It may be described as a central clearing-house and co-ordinator of institutions like the Y.M.C.A., the Men's and Women's Institutes, etc., the Playground Recreation Association, the Carnegie Trust, in England or America or, better, all these things and similar things rolled into one.

The executive and central administration are assisted by two permanent Commissions, one known as the "Liaison" Commission, which keeps itself in touch with the various kinds of workers and their peculiar needs. This work of *liaison* has been made all the more effective since the organisation of the Corporations of Labour. The second Commission is technical and is subdivided into a number of Committees, each dealing with a particular activity, as follows :—

1. Cinematograph.
2. Radiotelegraphy.
3. Music.
4. The Theatre.

5. General culture.
6. Professional technical instruction.
7. Woman's work at home (needlework, lace-making, embroidery, etc.).
8. Home nursing and medicine.
9. Folk-lore.
10. Domestic economy.
11. After-work industries, including home-crofts.
12. Hygiene.
13. Housing.
14. Furnishing.
15. Excursions into the country, to the mountains, sea-side, etc.
16. Touring.
17. Sport.

Each Province has a similar organisation, which allows for decentralisation and provides for peculiar local needs. The bulk of the money is found by the workers themselves through the Trade Union (Syndicate) rates. Strike funds no longer being required, large sums are now available for social work.

The work already accomplished by this Institution is positively remarkable. Besides the money found by the workers themselves, voluntary subscriptions and assistance by private persons and firms have literally poured in, while the State itself contributes to maintain the purely administrative side. It is impossible, however, to give a full account here of the Institution's activities. Those readers who would care to pursue the subject further may be referred to one of the Institu-

tion's publications, *I Primi Due Anni di Attività dell' Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro*, 1927, obtainable from the Institution's headquarters in Rome (*Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro, Via in Lucina 17*).

I will accordingly confine myself to noting a few points that have struck me personally in the course of a short tour of inspection undertaken this year in Central Italy.

I was particularly struck by the fine buildings placed at the disposal of the Institution in large and small towns alike, the excellence of some of the lending libraries and reading rooms (where the principal newspapers and reviews, besides those published by the Institution itself, are to be found), and the variety of opportunities for sport which the Institution provides, ranging from tennis and football to bowls and billiards, from ski-ing and roller-skating to dancing, athletics and cycling. Everywhere I found great enthusiasm among the organisers and the workers. In Florence I noticed there were eighty railway-men spending several evenings a week in attending English classes, which include, for the higher standards, lectures (with slides) in English on a variety of interesting subjects. At a small town near Florence I came in for a theatrical show, most creditably performed by the operatives of a straw-hat factory. Some of the firms in North Italy have built well-equipped, small theatres for their work-people, and

all the great actors and actresses, on the invitation of the Duke of Aosta, who was first President of the Institution, have volunteered to give up so many days of the year in acting gratuitously to the work-people in their own halls and in coaching and teaching them for their parts and giving them hints for the production of their plays. I ran across a couple of professional actors in the course of doing this in a small, out-of-the-way town in Umbria. I found thousands of work-people, too, taking advantage of the facilities granted by the Institution, with the assistance of greatly reduced fares on the State Railways, to make holiday excursions into the country from the towns and *vice-versa*. The special arrangements also to promote opportunities for the work-people to travel greatly impressed me. To any worker, on demand, a policy is issued for a given tour, together with full instructions with regard to routes, lodging and board, and the sights to be seen. The worker then subscribes weekly by the purchase of special stamps affixed to the policy until the sum required for the chosen tour is covered. Armed then with his policy, he is free to make his tour without any further expenses—and, of course, the arrangements of the Institution enable this to be done at an absolutely minimum cost. But these are details which could be multiplied indefinitely. For instance, a free insurance policy is issued to each member to cover all accidents befalling him in the

course of his recreative activities ; special reductions are accorded to members, not only with regard to travelling tickets, but also for theatres, cinemas, sporting shows, medicines, and in certain general supply stores. Facilities are accorded to members for obtaining protection for original intellectual work (authors' rights) and for the poorer members with regard to education. All members, moreover, have the right of free entry into the museums and picture galleries belonging to the State. Suffice it to say, in conclusion, that the Institution has covered the whole country with a network of organisation, which is by no means a paper organisation, but one that is fulfilling the hopes of its promoters far beyond what was originally expected. It is, in fact, accomplishing a truly marvellous piece of social work, which will undoubtedly bear, in the course of time, precious fruits for civilisation in Italy.

### SECTION III

#### THE LAW ON THE ATTRIBUTIONS AND PREROGATIVES OF THE PRIME MINISTER

It is not necessary for my purpose to give a translation of the law in English. The burden of it can be summed up very briefly. It certifies the King as head of the Executive and the Prime Minister as head of the Government. The Ministers are responsible to the Prime Minister for their particular departments, and through him to the King. The Prime Minister accordingly ceases to be *primus inter pares* with respect to the other members of the Cabinet, but its veritable chief. The King exercises his position as head of the Government through his responsible Ministers ; and the Prime Minister is responsible to the King for the proper Government of the country and not to Parliament. The Prime Minister is *ex officio* a member of the Regency Council, in the event of a minor ascending the throne ; he takes precedence of all save members of the Royal Family ; and anyone committing an act against the life, the

integrity and liberty of the Prime Minister is liable to heavy punishment. Lastly, no motion in either house may be proposed without the consent of the Prime Minister ; and if a bill be rejected by one house, it may be re-presented after a term of three months to be voted upon by secret ballot, after any proposed amendments have been discussed and adopted.

The law thus establishes the independence of the Executive of the Legislature. The Legislature nevertheless has ample opportunities of criticising the Administration on the occasions when the departmental Budgets are submitted ; and these have to be submitted each year regularly.

For a Parliament, when Party Government is not in accordance with constitutional practice (refer Section VI), there is no earthly reason why the Executive should not thus be independent of the Legislature. It is for the Prime Minister to adapt himself to the general attitude of the two Houses of Parliament or, if he also fails to lead them, his Government will have all their legislation blocked and their supplies eventually cut off. So the power of the Prime Minister is by no means unlimited. So also, if there arose a conflict between the King and Parliament over the Government, the King, sooner rather than later, would have to give way and charge somebody else with the formation of the Government.

In the absence of Party Government, moreover, little greater burden of responsibility is placed on the King than there is where the usual form of parliamentary Government prevails. The King's choice cannot fall on the leader of a minority party, where no organised parties exist. He would call the man who seems to him best fitted to form and conduct his Government, just as he does at present within the majority Party in the form of Parliament to which we are accustomed. Thus, in the event of the sudden death of Mr. Baldwin, for instance, the King would summon one of the Cabinet to form the Government, but it cannot be foretold for certain whom he would summon. He exercises his own judgment in such cases, as he did when he summoned Mr. Asquith and not Mr. Morley (who was equally in the running for the appointment) on the death of Mr. Campbell Bannerman.

## SECTION IV

## THE LAW DEFINING THE POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

In the Italian, the law is described as the right of the Executive to issue rules having the binding force of Law.

These rules, which may be effected by Royal Decree, after having received Cabinet approval and after consultation with the Council of State (which corresponds roughly to His Majesty's Privy Council, one section of which is a purely legal body) are such as appertain to :—

(a) The execution of the laws of the land—that is, laws very frequently require detailed regulations to enable them to be explained (*cf.* King's Regulations with respect to Military Law).

(b) The interpretation of laws or of customs having virtually the force of Law ; *e.g.*, conditions may arise when the interpretation of a law becomes necessary or a custom may require definition and so be given definitely the force of Law.

(c) The organisation and working of the adminis-

trative machine. In other words, the Executive is solely responsible for the administration and its organisation, and for the Government officials which are, so to speak, the employees of the Government. Thus an amalgamation of Ministries, the creation of a new Ministry, the suppression of a Ministry, the conditions of employment of Government officials, etc., etc., are the sole concern of the Executive. Parliament accordingly ceases to have legislative rights in this respect ; although, as we have seen, the presentation of the annual departmental Budget affords opportunities for criticism and control.

The law also defines and limits the power of the Executive to promulgate *Royal Decree Laws* by Orders in Council. Such laws are declared to lapse if Parliament fails to approve of them within two years. On the other hand Parliament is bound to be given the opportunity of considering them not later than the third session from the date of their promulgation.

Hence the powers given by this law to the Executive are definitely limited, so that the independence of the Executive can in no sense be described as exaggerated. In fact, a very even balance of powers has now been created in Italy between the King, the Government and the Legislature, comparable to that existing between those of the President of the United States and Con-

gress. Nor has the written Statute of the Kingdom of Italy been in any way altered by the changes in constitutional practice authorised by this law or by the law described in section III.

## SECTION V

### THE LAW OF THE CORPORATIONS

THE *Law of the Corporations*, passed on 3rd April, 1926, together with a number of explanatory regulations having the force of law, which have since been authorised, is a lengthy document occupying 36 closely-packed pages in the edition in my possession.\* Consequently a general description is all that I intend to attempt here.

The general aim of the law is the organisation of the productive forces of the country within the orbit of the State, so that private interests may be more easily made to coincide with the interests of the community ; to put an end to class warfare, to promote co-operation between the various factors of production ; to substitute the justice of the State for wasteful strikes and lock-outs as the means by which industrial disputes may be settled, to make productive labour and a sense of responsibility to the Nation as a whole the basis of citizenship.

To this end only those "professional associations"

\* Cf. C. Costamagna, *Diritto Corporativo Italiano* (Unione Tipografico Editrice Torinese, Turin, 1927).

(by which term are included Trade Unions, Employers  
*The Professional Unions, Co-operatives and Guilds, etc.) are Associations.* recognised juridically, which subscribe to the following requisites :

(1) Each professional association must represent one category and one category only of employers or workers (e.g., mixed unions would not be recognised). The idea here is that each professional association is a class organisation created to protect the interests of that class ; and since, if two or more classes were represented in a single association, such an association might become divided in its interests, the unity of the association might be threatened with a collapse and its members thereby lose the advantage of collective bargaining.

(2) There must be only one association of members of a particular category in any one territorial circumscription (district). The main reason for this proviso is the same as for (1). Associations, however, may be organised by Commune, by Province, by Region or nationally ; and associations of the same category in different Communes, Provinces or Regions are grouped to form federations of provincial or national extent, according to the peculiar circumstances of the particular trade. Such associations of the same category—single and federal—are classed as associations of the first and superior degree.

(3) No employers' association may be juridically recognised unless the members represented employ at least *one tenth* of the number of workers engaged in a particular category of work within its district.

Similarly no workers' association may be recognised unless the members represent at least *one tenth* of the number of workers within its district engaged in a particular category of work.

The object of this proviso is obvious. Organisations insignificant in numbers in relation to the whole number of persons engaged in a particular category of work could hardly be considered sufficiently representative of that category to deserve recognition, if, as will be seen further on, they are to be the only organisations with a legal right to represent that category. A figure larger than one-tenth might have been chosen ; but there are parts of Italy where the proportion of organised workers is small, and one of the objects of the Act is to extend the benefits of collective bargaining to all workers. It is important to bear this in mind, for anti-Fascists have attempted to make out that this proviso implies that the fascist associations represent so few employers or workers that it was necessary to put the minimum proportion as low as one-tenth ; or else very few of the fascist organisations could be recognised. They even try to make out that by this proviso the mass of employers and workers are in fact

controlled by a fascist oligarchy representing only one-tenth of the whole! The facts are quite the reverse. The fascist organisations are out of all proportion stronger throughout Italy than any of the other organisations, save alone with respect to the metallurgical workers in Turin and Milan. But even here the fascist organisations contain the majority of organised workers. It is only where the mass of employers and workers in a particular category are unorganised that the number of organised employers and workers corresponds to a small proportion of the whole; but even so, of those who are organised the majority belong almost invariably to the fascist association. Thus the anti-Fascist case in so far as this proviso is concerned has no practical justification whatever.

(4) No association whatever may be juridically recognised unless, in accordance with their Articles of Association, they include among their objects, not only the general furthering of the economic and moral interests of their members, but also the taking of an active part in the technical instruction, religious, moral and national education of their members and the support of charitable foundations open to their members.

No association, moreover, may be juridically recognised unless the directors of the association, together

with the association's staff of employees, can provide guarantees of capacity, morality and a firm national faith.

Here, of course, those anti-Fascists, who reject the fascist doctrine to the effect that only those who have a national consciousness and a sense of responsibility to the community as a whole possess a right to have a hand in the Government of the community, may be allowed to complain. Here we are up against a question of principle. It is not a question, as some would make out, of securing power indefinitely to the fascist Party—it is a question of securing power indefinitely to those of high moral character, intelligence and patriotism. Indeed, through this proviso the fascist Revolution realises one of its greatest ideas, namely, the reconciliation of Democracy in the sense of *une carrière ouverte aux talents* and of Aristocracy in the exact meaning of the term.

So only those professional associations that subscribe to the above requisites may be juridically recognised. Other associations may be freely formed, and may be recognised *de facto*, but not *de jure*.

The juridically recognised associations possess the monopoly of legal representation for the whole class of employers or workers of their particular category within their district, including those employers or workers belonging to the same category, who are not

members. The collective labour contracts made under their auspices apply equally to members and non-members of the same category.

They have a right to levy (a maximum rate is fixed both for employers' and workers' associations) contributions not only from their own members but from the whole category of employers or workers whom they represent. But non-members equally share in the benefits secured through any action of the association.

Each association is bound to set aside a certain percentage of its revenue to form a guarantee fund ; and after providing for the costs of its organisation and for the various forms of welfare work, which it is bound to undertake on behalf of its members, it must subscribe a definite percentage in support of the National After-Work Institution, the National Balilla Institution, the National Institution for the Protection of and Assistance of Mothers and Children, the "Patronato Nazionale" (an Institution the object of which is to provide the worker with legal advice, assistance with regard to any claims he may have respecting insurance, assistance with regard to emigration and a host of similar services), and the Corporation of which it forms part.

Individuals who pursue more than one regular calling may belong to two or more associations. A juridically recognised association may have no members

below the age of 18 ; but women have the same rights of membership as men.

Associations are juridically recognised by the Minister of Corporations after fulfilling certain formalities.

The associations of employers and the associations of workers engaged in the same industry are grouped together to form a Corporation. This is a *The Corporations.* State organ and, beyond the representatives of the associations composing it, the State provides for the cost of its administration by means of the quota reserved to it from the associations' receipts.

Its duties include the supervision of its associations to the end that they answer to the requirements of the law and fulfil their duties according to the law and their Articles of Association ; the establishment of labour exchanges and the keeping of statistics of the employed and unemployed ; the co-ordination, encouragement and subsidising of the welfare work of the associations ; and the conciliation by means of their good offices, when seized with the task by the parties concerned, of any labour dispute.

Professional associations of the free professions (doctors, engineers, artists, independent artisans, etc.) though in other respects they resemble the other associations, form part of the Corporations in so far as they may be considered an essential part of a given industry. On the other hand, Co-operative Societies (including

Guilds) have their special status. Those exercising a liberal profession or an art must inform their communal Authorities.

Employers of labour, whether they belong to judicially organised associations or otherwise, are bound to make a return to the Government department concerned of the numbers of their employees or workers.

The Minister of the Corporations, after fulfilling certain formalities, has, in circumstances of mismanagement, fraud or the violation of the law and regulations, the faculty of delegating plenary powers to the Secretary of the association, or, for a period, to a Government commissioner, or even, according to the gravity of the case, of dissolving the association.

The associations of Government and local Government servants do not come within the scope of the Act, but are provided for otherwise.

If the conciliatory machinery provided by the Corporations fails to settle a labour dispute, the

*The Magistrature of Labour.* question goes for final settlement before one of the sixteen ordinary Appeal Courts of the Realm. The judge in such cases is aided by two assessors, chosen by the judge, from a list of experts on the particular matter under dispute. These experts must, of course, not be in any way parties to or personally interested in the case. Lists of these experts are compiled by the Courts and revised every two years. They are chosen from among ordinary citizens and are

divided into groups and sub-groups according to the subject of their expert knowledge.

The Court decides on the interpretation of existing contracts in accordance with the law of the land and the regulations regarding the interpretation of collective contracts.

The Court also decides the conditions of new collective contracts in accordance with principles of equity and with those laid down in the Labour Charter (*q.v.*, Section VI).

Strikes and lock-outs are severely forbidden and liable to very heavy penalties.

*Strikes and Lock-outs.*

Strikes and lock-outs are classified under three heads: those having a political object or with the object of putting pressure on the State; those concerned with the working of public services (a schedule of what constitutes a public service is annexed to the Act); and those having an ordinary economic object concerned with industries not scheduled as constituting a public service.

The degree of penalties varies in severity with the nature of the strike or lock-out as classified. Each class of strike and lock-out is defined. I will give here the definitions of those that come under Class III:—

(a) Employers of labour, who, without justifiable motives and with the sole object of obtaining from their employees (or workers) a modifica-

tion of the conditions of the actual collective contracts in force, suspend work in their factories, businesses or offices.

(b) Employees or workmen who, numbering three or more and by previously concerted action, abandon work or do their work in such a way as to disturb its continuity or regularity, with the object of obtaining different contracts of labour than those actually in force.

Thus the professional associations are the foundations on which the corporative State is being built.

*The Corporative State.*

Each local professional association is grouped into a federation of associations of the same category—provincial, or national federations, as we have shown. The whole are then grouped to form twelve confederations, six for employers and six for employed, representing industry, agriculture, commerce, transport by sea and air, land and internal water transport, and banking. To these two groups of six each is added a third group of free professions, composed (at present) of three bodies : Artisans, artists and the professional callings. Each of these three groups forms a Union, to which is added the Union of Co-operative Societies (including Guilds). The whole are co-ordinated through the organisation of the Corporations, which, as I have stated, are organs of the State, under the supreme direction of the Ministry of Corporations, which keeps

also in direct touch with the individual needs and aspirations of the various categories of production by means of a Council of Federations.

It proved a long and difficult task to classify all these activities, to constitute the various professional associations and to complete the hierarchical organisation. Subject to certain modifications that may yet be introduced, the edifice may now be considered finished, or at least sufficiently so to enable it to set to work and to allow the Government to prepare the scheme on its basis for the new parliamentary representation, the exact form of which it is expected will be decided upon towards the end of the current year (*cf. Section VII*).

Things, indeed, are now beginning to work fairly smoothly ; and with this I think there is only one more point in connection with this vast and revolutionary ordering of society that need be mentioned here. The members of the professional associations have no need to belong to the fascist Party, nor indeed to call themselves expressly Fascists. Nobody is pressed to join the juridically recognised or, if one prefers to call them the fascist associations. At the same time nobody is refused who applies to join, provided he or she has nothing against him morally, and is not known as a public agitator in favour of class warfare and other ideologies expressly condemned by law. He or she is not required to sign any undertaking. As a member

he or she may be regarded as at least acquiescing in the scheme, and that is all that is required. The guarantees required with respect to the Secretary of the association, etc., and the very nature of the organisation itself are its own safeguard against the objects of the scheme being defeated. The benefits which the scheme is affording both employers and workers are daily turning doubters and the half-hearted into enthusiastic members and supporters. As Rossoni, one of the principal authors of the scheme and President of the Union of the Workers' Federations, has said : "We are in no hurry to get everybody within our ranks. We have abundant numbers to enable the scheme to be worked without the introduction of all the country's workers. It is better that these should come in gradually as they become convinced of its merits. Meantime those who remain outside are no great losers, for they participate equally in all the essential benefits."



EDMONDO ROSSONI,  
*President of the National Confederation of Fascist Trade Unions.*

## SECTION VI

### THE LABOUR CHARTER

#### *Text*

1. The Italian Nation is an organism having ends, a life and means superior in power and duration to the single individuals or groups of individuals that compose it. It is a moral, political and economic unity, which collectively realises itself in the fascist State.

2. Work in all its forms, whether intellectual, technical or manual, is a social duty. On this score, and only on this score, is it protected by the State.

The whole body of production must be considered as a united effort from the national point of view ; it has a common object which may be summarised as the well-being of the single individuals or groups of individuals composing the Nation and the development of the national strength.

3. Trade Union (Syndical) or, in other words, professional organisation is free. But only the Trade Union which is juridically recognised and placed under the control of the State has the right legally to represent

the entire category of employers and employees (workers of all kinds) for which it is constituted ; to protect its interests *vis-à-vis* the State and other professional associations ; to stipulate collective contracts of labour binding on all persons belonging to the category ; to levy contributions from them and to carry out as delegates on their behalf functions of public interest.

4. In labour contracts the solidarity between the various factors of production finds its expression through the conciliation of the opposing interests of employers and employed and their subordination to the superior interests of production.

5. The Magistrature of Labour is the organ whereby the State shall intervene to regulate labour controversies, whether with reference to the observance of pacts or other existing regulations, or with reference to the determination of new labour conditions.

6. The professional associations which have juridical recognition shall be the means by which the equality before the law of employers and employees (workers) is to be assured, by which discipline in the effort of production and labour is to be maintained, and by which production and labour may be improved.

The Corporations shall constitute the joint organisations of the forces of production and represent collectively the interests of production.

In view of this collective representation, the interests

of production being national interests, the Corporations are juridically recognised as organs of the State (referred to sometimes as the "corporative organs").

As representatives of the collective interests of production, the Corporations may dictate binding regulations with regard to conditions of labour and to the co-ordination of production, whenever they receive the required powers from the respective associations composing them.

7. The corporative State considers that private initiative in the field of production is the most efficacious and most useful instrument in the interests of the Nation.

The private organisation of production being a function, however, of national interest, the organiser of any economic undertaking shall be responsible to the State for the direction given to production. Collaboration between the factors of production, moreover, results in a reciprocity of rights and duties. The hired worker, whether intellectual, technical or manual, is an active collaborator in any economic undertaking, the management of which, however, belongs to the employer who is responsible for its proper working.

8. The professional associations of employers shall be obliged to promote in every way possible an increase of, and improvement in, the methods of production and a reduction in costs. The duty of the representatives

of those who exercise a liberal profession or an art and of the associations of public servants is to promote the interests of art, science and letters, to improve productive methods and to see that the moral ends of the corporative organisation of society are energetically pursued.

9. Intervention by the State in economic production should take place only when private initiative is lacking, or is insufficient, or when the political interests of the State are involved. Such intervention may assume the form of supervision, assistance or direct management.

10. In labour disputes, judicial action may not be undertaken until the corporative organ has failed to bring about a settlement by conciliatory means.

In controversies concerning individuals respecting the interpretation or application of labour contracts, the professional association may offer their good offices with a view to settlement by conciliation.

Competency in such controversies devolves in the last resort on the ordinary Magistrature with the addition of assessors nominated by the interested professional associations. (Thus is constituted the Magistrature of Labour.)

11. The professional associations shall be obliged to regulate, by means of collective contracts, the conditions of labour between the categories of employers

and employees (workers) which they respectively represent.

These collective contracts shall be stipulated between associations of the first degree (*e.g.*, the simple members of a given Corporation), under the control and guidance of the Corporation. In certain cases, however, in accordance with the provisions established by Law and the approved regulations contained in an association's Articles, the collective contracts may be stipulated between associations of a superior degree (*e.g.*, the federation of associations representing a particular category).

Every collective labour contract, under penalty of nullification, must contain precise regulations on disciplinary matters, on the period of trial (before employees, that is, any kind of hired worker, are confirmed in their contract), on the amount and conditions of salaries and on the hours of labour.

12. The activity of the Trade Unions, the work of conciliation of the Corporations, and the decisions of the Magistrature of Labour shall guarantee the approximation of salaries to the normal conditions of life, to the possibilities of production and to the earning power of labour.

The actual determination of salaries shall not, however, be controlled by any general rule, but entrusted to agreements between the parties through collective contracts.

13. The statistics collected by the Departments of State, by the Central Statistical Institute and by the professional associations which are juridically recognised with respect to the conditions of production and of labour, the condition of the money market, the variations in the standard of living of those who hire out their labour, duly co-ordinated and elaborated by the Ministry of Corporations, shall provide a criterion for reconciling the interests of the various categories and classes, and the interests of the latter with the superior interests of production.

14. Salaries should take the form best suited to the requirements of the employee (worker) and of the undertaking.

When payment is made by piecework, and the piece-work accounts are settled over periods longer than a fortnight, adequate accounts must be made up weekly or fortnightly.

Night-work is not included in the regular periodical periods of labour, and must be payable at higher rates than day-work.

When labour is paid by piecework, payment must be determined so that the industrious worker with a normal capacity for labour shall be able to attain small earnings above his basic pay.

15. Those who hire out their labour have the right to a weekly rest on Sundays.

Collective contracts shall apply this principle, taking into account the existing legal regulations and the technical requirements of an undertaking, and within these limits shall insure respect for civil and religious holidays according to local traditions. Employees (workers) must scrupulously observe working hours.

16. After a year of uninterrupted service in an undertaking requiring continuous work an employee (worker) shall have the right to an annual paid holiday.

17. In undertakings requiring continuous work, an employee (worker) shall have the right, in the event of his being discharged through no fault of his own, to an indemnity proportionate to the number of years of his service. Such an indemnity shall likewise be due in the event of his death.

18. The passing of any undertaking requiring continuous work into new hands shall not affect the labour contract, and the employees (workers) shall preserve all their rights under the new management. Similarly, the illness of an employee (worker) not exceeding a determined period shall not terminate his labour contract. A call to arms or service in the national Militia shall not be a reason for the discharge of an employee (worker).

19. Infractions of discipline and acts which disturb the normal working of an undertaking, committed by

employees (workers), shall be punished according to their gravity by fine, suspension of work, or immediate discharge without indemnity. A description of the cases to which such penalties are applicable shall be specified (in the labour contracts).

20. New employees (workers newly taken on) shall be subject to a period of trial during which the right of terminating the contract is reciprocal, with payment only for the time of actual work.

21. The obligation to make collective labour contracts extends, together with the benefits such contracts secure and the discipline they exact, to home workers also. Special regulations shall in due course be issued by the State for policing home-work and securing hygienic conditions in the homes where such work is carried on.

22. The State shall ascertain and control the phenomenon of employment and unemployment of workers, the figures for which form an index of the conditions of production and of labour.

23. The labour exchanges shall accordingly be under the control of the Corporations (which are organs of the State) and so based on the various categories of employment. Employers shall be obliged to engage workers through the medium of these exchanges, with freedom of choice between the whole number of names inscribed on the rolls except that, other things being equal,

preference must be given to members of the fascist Party or of the juridically recognised Trade Unions in the order of seniority of their enrolment.

24. Professional associations of workers must carry out selective action among their members with the object of bringing about a continual increase in their technical capacity and moral worth.

25. The Corporations shall have the duty of seeing that the laws relating to accidents and the policing of labour conditions are observed by the individuals who are members of the associations composing them (and representing their category).

26. Insurance is an excellent example of the spirit of collaboration between classes. Both employer and employee must proportionately contribute to the costs. It shall be the duty of the State through the Corporations and professional associations to co-ordinate and unify, as far as this may be practicable, the systems of insurance and the insurance Institutes.

27. The fascist State proposes to bring about, first, the improvement of insurance against accidents ; secondly, the improvement and extension of maternity insurance ; thirdly, compulsory insurance against occupational illnesses and tuberculosis, as a first step towards compulsory insurance against all illness ;\* fourthly, the improvement of unemployment insurance ;

\* Insurance against tuberculosis has since become obligatory (Oct., 1927).

and fifthly, the adoption of a special marriage endowment insurance for young workers.

28. It is the duty of the workers' associations to protect their members administratively and legally regarding accidents and social insurance. Wherever practicable, the creation of a Provident Fund for sick workers, shall be made part of the collective labour contracts, such fund to be fed by contributions from both the employers and employees, and to be administered by officers appointed by both parties under the control of the Corporation.

29. Welfare-work organisations must in all cases form part of the programme of the professional associations, on behalf of both members and non-members of the same category. The professional associations must carry out these duties directly through their own organs. They must not delegate them to other organisations or institutes except for general reasons arising out of the fact that a particular welfare-work organisation goes beyond the particular category of producers represented.

30. Education and instruction, especially professional instruction, shall constitute one of the principal duties of the professional associations towards both members and non-members. They shall support the work of the After-Work Institution and other national educative movements.

The above, I think, read in conjunction with the last section, needs no explanation. I have added in brackets here and there, some explanations of the use of a word or of a phrase, where otherwise a misunderstanding appeared to be possible. In trying to render, too, my translation into intelligible English, it has been necessary, in order to make certain of reproducing the sense, to do some slight violence to the text.

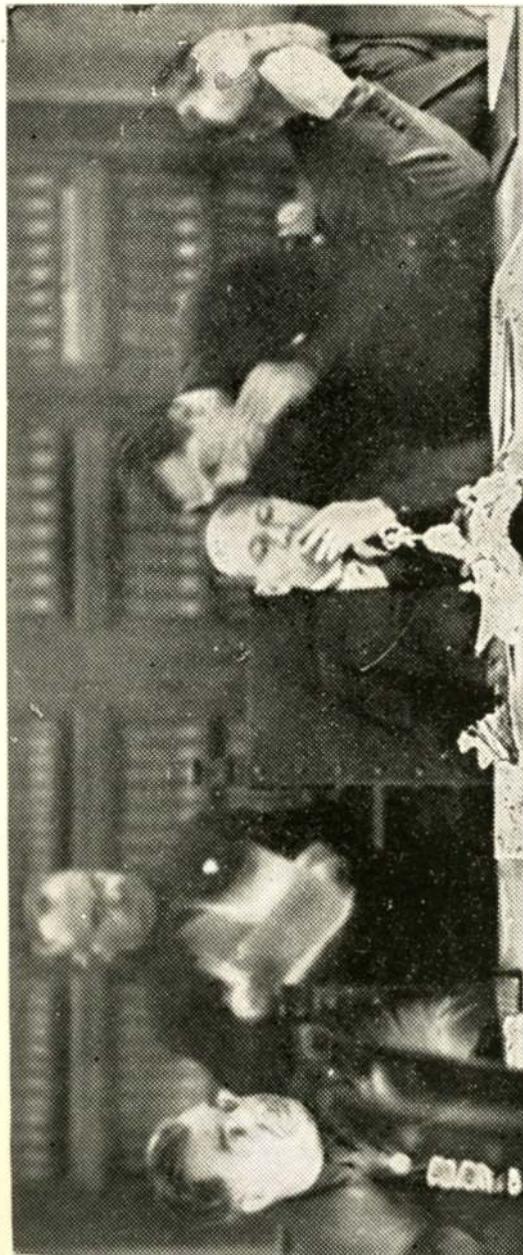
The text which I have taken as my model is the official one reproduced in a small volume by His Excellency Giuseppe Bottai, Under-Secretary of State for the Corporations (*La Carta del Lavoro*, published under the auspices of the Ministry of the Corporations, 1927). Those who can read Italian would do well to study this little volume, which contains a running commentary, clause by clause, of the Charter by one of its principal authors ; for Messrs. Rossoni (Head of the Federation of Workers' Trade Unions), Benni (Head of the Federation of the Employers' Unions), Bottai and Mussolini himself may be regarded as the principal authors of this exceedingly important document.

Its publication on 21st April, 1927, was widely commented on all over the world as the most remarkable attempt in social legislation to protect the worker from capitalist exploitation, the capitalist from ca-canny and to subordinate both capital and labour to the paramount interests of the Nation.

It signifies the codification of the guarantees of the workers, conferring, as it does, on all workers the advantage of collective bargaining and providing the type for the collective contract.

The Labour Charter, however, is not a law. It is a manifesto prepared and issued by the central fascist revolutionary organisation (The Fascist Grand Council). Nevertheless, portions of it have already been translated into Law, others into regulations having the force of laws—and orders have been issued to the Prefects that its terms must be respected and form the base of all collective labour contracts. Similarly the Law Courts are to take it as the criterion on which to base their decisions with respect to any disputes with which they may be seized.

The sixteen ordinary provincial Courts of Appeal, which are bound to prove more impartial (given the high tradition of justice which Italian Courts enjoy) than specially constituted tribunals, are now working everywhere as the Magistrature of Labour. Such Courts are accustomed to assessing damages and settling cases on pleas of equity, so that, aided by the expert assessors provided by the Corporations Act, they may be regarded as eminently suited to try trade disputes. In Italy, where there is no caste distinction between the *toff* and the *bloke*, as there is in England,



THE SIGNING OF THE LABOUR CHARTER.

Members of the Government at the Historic Meeting of the Grand Fascist Council, April 26, 1927.  
Reading from left to right: FEDERZONI, MARNELLI, MUSSOLINI, BOTTAI and VOLPI.

there has never been any question of the working man not having complete confidence in the impartiality of the country's judges. For one thing, the legal profession is much more democratically recruited than in England, and the Italian, having a good deal more imagination than the average Englishman, is far more capable of seeing another man's or another class's point of view than we are. These facts, taken together with the more elaborate, albeit more fussy, rules of evidence in Italian Law, are the chief reasons accounting for this fortunate condition of affairs, which no doubt has largely contributed to the enthusiastic acceptance of the whole scheme by the working classes. It was among the employers rather than among the working classes that grave doubts were at first expressed and where a lack of enthusiasm is still evident.

Only one important case involving trade disputes has, up to the time of going to Press, been referred for legal decision. In this case the workers' association won their plea. The main work of the Corporations to date has consisted in arranging by agreement new collective bargains and revising the old ones. There were more than 1,000 such transactions in 1926, and in these the working man has in nearly every case bettered his position, sometimes to a marked extent. But several years must, indeed, elapse before we can pronounce judgment with any real

confidence on the working of the corporative State ; yet this much we may say : the Labour Charter is one of those things which cannot easily be gone back upon, for it represents a genuine social conquest.

## SECTION VII

### THE NEW ITALIAN PARLIAMENT

THE Italian Parliament is composed of two Houses, a Senate and a House of Commons (Deputies) having equal powers. The idea of the fascist Government is to transform the latter into a House of Representatives of the organised productive forces in the country and to maintain the former, more or less as at present composed—that is, of members nominated by the Crown on the advice of the Prime Minister.

To be exact, the Senate is composed of the Royal Princes closely related to the King and an unlimited number of life members eligible should they qualify as persons of national eminence in any one of a series of categories—such as distinguished members of the fighting forces, civil servants, scientists, professors, lawyers, writers, politicians, etc., and those who pay a certain minimum sum in direct taxes. All members except the Royal Princes must have reached the age of forty and the Senate has the right to reject nominations effected under any of the categories save the last named.

Probably for the present no change will be made in the composition of the Senate, the fascist idea being that it already fulfils very adequately the fascist ideal of what a Senate should be, namely, a House of Faculties and of the most distinguished men among those who have conspicuously served their country.

Nevertheless it is felt that the Senate could be improved, and the following questions are under debate :—

(1) That the numbers should be limited—that is, each category limited—beyond certain *ex-officio* members, such as those who have held the appointment of Chief of the General Staff, President of the High Court of Appeal, Chief Secretary of the great Departments of State, besides ex-Prime Ministers Field-Marshals, etc., and possibly Presidents of the Royal Academy (which, by the way, is a new body created by the fascist Government and composed of the more eminent writers, artists, scientists, etc., of the land—rather like our own Royal Society, but extended to include men of letters and artists having special social functions to perform).

(2) That the last category, at present composed of rich men, should also be limited and be changed to one of a general character with no money qualification ; and that the Senate should be given the right to reject the nominations, as with other categories.

(3) That the various professional organisations, such as doctors and surgeons, engineers and architects, journalists, university professors, lawyers, etc., should have direct representation in the Upper House rather than in the Lower House, each representative serving for a specified number of years, but re-eligible.

Whether any of these reforms will be passed into Law is, however, at present doubtful. In any case, the question is not one of urgency and will no doubt be deferred until a later date.

The reform of the Lower House, on the other hand, has been definitely decided on, though the precise form of election is still under discussion. But in any case the representatives, as we have said, will be of the organised productive forces in the country, that is, of the fascist, or in other words, juridically recognised Trade and Industrial Unions, called professional associations, which were summarily described in Section V—equal numbers being allotted to capital and labour, employers and employed.

*The  
House of  
Commons.*

The representatives will also hail from each Province or Region. In other words, each Province or Region will be represented through the local organisations in order to secure members with experience of local conditions. Each member will likewise be also a representative of a permanent economic interest—thus providing that the

members shall represent bodies, which, like the State itself, outlast the lives of the individuals composing them ; for it may be surely supposed that no body will be so neglectful of its interests as to send representatives to Parliament unwilling or incapable of voicing that body's permanent interests. Hence quite a different type of Member of Parliament should be thrown up, a type who, while capable of voicing to good purpose the interests of the body he represents, will not need to be an orator and is not likely to be a demagogue. The level of ability, too, should be greatly enhanced, for the interest of the body represented will be to send up its best, most experienced, most expert members ; for the representative must be a member himself of the body he represents—and, practically speaking, the representative will be personally known to the vast majority of the members of the body he represents.

Thus there will be no organised Parties represented at all in either House. Members of the Lower House will not be elected or selected on a political programme, but according to his ability to represent the various bodies' interests. And the Upper House, just as it is,

*The  
Abolition  
of Party  
Govern-  
ment.* being a House of Faculties and of persons who have risen to it on account of the eminent services they have rendered the country, will also represent no Party organisations. So any legislative measure proposed by the

Government will be debated on its own merits. Members, as at present in the Senate, may vote for the Government one day, against it the next. Criticism will be no less severe and the fate of legislation will be not only entirely in the hands of the members, but to a considerably greater degree than under a system of Party Government, when a Government, having secured a majority at an election, possesses the practically unchecked power to pass any measure it pleases into Law. The only check in fact under a system of Party Government, to a Government's omnipotence, is the fear of unpopularity at the next election, unless, of course, the tables are reversed with regard to a Party organisation in the Upper House.\*

The system of Party Government, as Mussolini once humorously remarked, is indeed a game invented by England, like cricket and football. It is scarcely serious ; and this, curiously enough, appears to be its sole justification. When neither Party, as in England, profoundly minds whether it is in or out, though pre-

\* As this edition goes to press (November, 1927), the Fascist Grand Council have passed a number of resolutions laying down the principles on which the new representation is to be based. These principles are in perfect agreement with my forecast, except that it is provided that the next legislature (1929-1934) will mark an intervening stage before the whole reform comes to be completed. The next legislature will represent the professional associations, but these representatives will not be freely elected. In the following legislature, on the other hand (when, it is hoped, the revolutionary period will have subsided and the corporative organisation of the State will have shot its roots and be working normally), the representatives will come to be freely elected by the professional associations.

ferring to be in, little harm is done. Under 18th-century conditions, when practically speaking only the landed interests were represented, heated as feeling sometimes ran, the heat was of the keenness of the game. Each side respected the other and gave it a sporting chance. Both sides obeyed the rules. Victory came to the side which excelled in clever debate, telling invective, cunning tactics (or even smartness, like the organising of a snap division) and, one might add, the art of gulling, if not of bribing, the electorate. Both sides knew that, whoever was in power, the safety of property and of England would not be imperilled.

With the Victorian era a change came about gradually. But it was a period of piping peace and growing prosperity, which postponed the day of reckoning. The gentleman-born still practically held the monopoly of the seats and each one knew that, in or out, neither his class nor his country would be let down. They were all public-school men, generally public-spirited, who knew what a game was and how to play it. Only gradually did the new man, who had not the same public-school, play-the-game traditions, begin to invade the sacred precincts of Westminster. Representatives of theories undermining to the traditions of the country, some of them dangerous for its safety, began to show formidable numbers. Representatives of oppressed and exploited classes, crying out bitterly and pro-



H. E. LUIGI FEDERZONI,  
*Minister of the Colonies.*

foundly for justice, began to make their voices heard. Simultaneously the growth of business in the conditions of a modern State became nearly overwhelming. The "premier club of the land" ceased to be the busy *rendez-vous* for the nimble-minded and intellectual sons of the upper classes. It became a house of work. Politics became a serious matter, and to play them as a game became, as a matter of fact, an anachronism. Yet still we persist in playing it! But the idea of politics as a game, such as the Party system provides, is incomprehensible to the foreigner and to the working man. It matters little to us, it is true, if the foreigner, who has always taken politics seriously, fails to understand it; but it is fatal to the foreigner, who, in his blindness, has copied our system. For if he cannot play the game and adhere to the rules, the game breaks down, as it has broken down hopelessly in nearly every case on the Continent. For one thing, the game is made for two. It is dangerous to play it with three. It is fatal to play it with an indefinite number, and this is how the foreigner (and the Irishman) plays it, who is so serious about politics that he will with difficulty compromise on his paper programmes, with the result that an indefinite number of Parties come to be formed, so that none hold a majority and one of the worst forms of Government corruption—log-rolling—creeps in.

On the other hand, it matters very much to us that

this sporting attitude of the English gentleman towards politics exasperates the working man, who would give his life to improve the conditions of his class. For him politics is the only constitutional hope, and so to him is a deadly serious matter. No wonder, in the face of the persistence of the game-spirit, he nurtures dreams of revolution !

Italy on fascist principles, taking also, as she does, politics very seriously, has swept the game away ; and she is making arrangements to provide a new kind of Parliament, which will be equally in touch with all parts of the country, equally in touch with all sections of the population, equally capable of bringing constructive and effective criticism to bear upon the Government, equally master of the country's legislation, equally capable of voicing the needs and grievances of all classes, but insures, at the same time, that criticism shall be constructive (not absent on one side out of Party loyalty or captious and opportunistic on the other for tactical reasons) ; that Governments should be stable and not be at the mercy of gusts of unpopularity ; that the Executive should be unhampered within prescribed limits, having regard to the colossal modern responsibilities with which it is shouldered ; that the Member of Parliament should be independent, not fearing for his popularity, not of the type that spells demagogue, an able exponent of the interests he repre-

sents and an expert in his particular department. Italy, moreover, is setting up a Parliament that will be an expression of the true idea of national solidarity instead of the false individualistic conception of the State which has led to the adoption, all the world over, of a pernicious individualistically organised electoral system. It secures representation only to those persons, corporatively organised, with equal rights for men and women, who possess national consciousness, a social sense, a sense of duty to the community, as guaranteed by the juridically recognised associations that accept the postulate of class inter-dependence within the supreme interests of the Nation.

It is a great experiment, if you please (for all such things take after the nature of experiments), but it is also a great idea founded on a sound theory. It deserves, indeed, to be watched and studied with the very greatest sympathy and open-mindedness.

## SECTION VIII

### EPILOGUE

I AM very conscious that what I have written might have been better written. My work has been done in my spare moments from other pressing occupations. If I could give myself the time to rewrite this book, I am aware that I could greatly improve it. Chapter No. III is too long. There are too many repetitions. These repetitions are the result of my striking, in the course of my work, new material, and of new ways of expressing much the same thing striking me as possibly illuminating to certain readers. I only trust that this excuse will prove their justification.

In any case, I believe I have succeeded in giving an accurate and, on the whole, a clear account of the doctrines and *Weltanschauung* of Fascism. Such an account is urgently required in England and, for all I know, in America too. Fascism to-day has been woefully misrepresented in England, is strangely misunderstood. And this, I think, is chiefly due to a conspiracy of circumstances. Conservatives have

### EPILOGUE

made public for the purposes of their own propaganda only those aspects of Fascism which result from a strong and efficient Government. This is, however, only half the truth, which reactionaries have seized upon to justify coercion ; while Liberals and Socialists, who consider themselves the progressive Parties and resent the intrusion of a rival altogether opposed to their respective ideologies, are concerned in allowing Fascism to pass as reactionary. Hence there has resulted a kind of conspiracy of silence and of subdued tones on all sides. Moreover, the independent commercialised Press have helped to give a wrong impression of the facts ; for very naturally they find current news, especially if it is of a sensational character, better selling matter than ideas. So the British public, who largely rely on these newspapers for their instruction, have obtained their notions of Fascism from the accidental incidents of the Revolution in Italy.\*

We need not seek for further reasons, although it is unquestionably true that the more unscrupulous supporters of those against whom Fascism is fighting its battle, have also indulged in a campaign of violent calumny. It is impossible to attribute all the misrepresentations that have appeared in the Liberal and Socialist Press to ignorance only.

The object of this book, however, is to give an

\* The above was written before I received Mussolini's *Preface*.

accurate exposition of fascist doctrine, as endorsed by the creators and leaders of the movement in Italy ; and the doctrine has nothing whatever to do with the question whether or not Italians are or are not applying the doctrine wisely, or realising it too precipitously, that is, at too great a cost in human values. The doctrine remains the same in either case, and must be judged on its merits. Those who come to approve of the doctrine must take their own steps to realise it in accordance with the conditions of the country of which they are members ; and in an old country like Great Britain, with a long national history and tradition, the constitutional path is undoubtedly the right one for these people to take. The coming of Fascism in England, we hope, need not be accompanied, as in Italy, by violent Revolution, so that English men and women must above all begin by learning to dissociate in their minds Fascism and the various violent and dictatorial accompaniments that happen to be associated with it in Italy.

And it is on a point closely connected with this that I would like to conclude. Fascists in each country must make Fascism their own national movement, adopting symbols and tactics which conform to the traditions, psychology and tastes of their own land. Do not seize on the accidentals of the movement or you will be in danger of missing the essentials. Remember

that, though truth is universal, its acceptance need never make the world the same colour, for in its application to the individual case is born variety. It is only falsehood that is drab. The infinite variety of the Universe is in reality a perpetual testimony to its essential unity, a chorus of harmony in praise of its Maker, One God in three Persons.

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